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New Statesman

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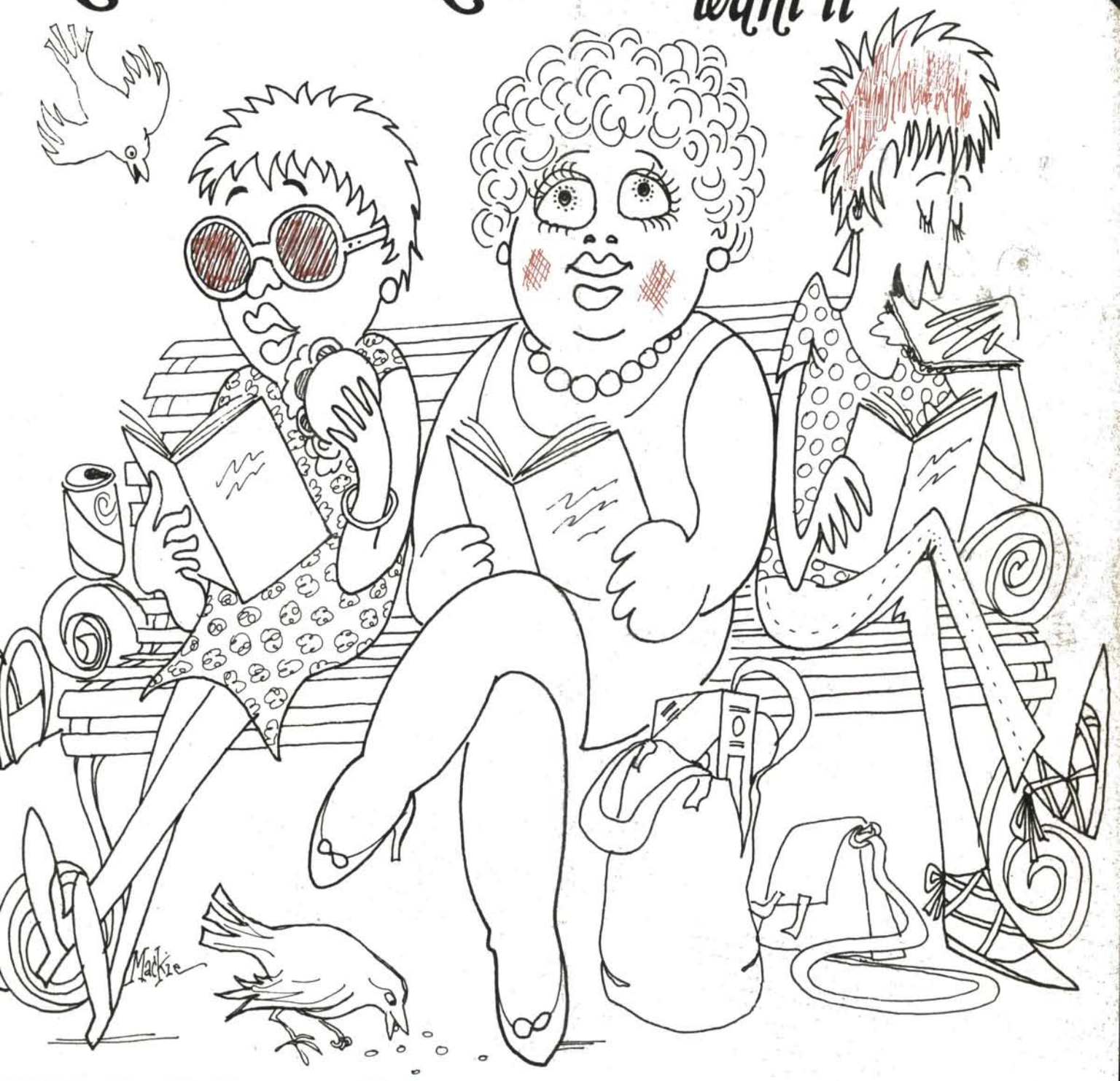

PLUS: Solicitors self-destruct; Nigeria's illegal cargoes; Michèle Barrett on feminism and Left traditions

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New Statesman

New Statesman
14-16 Farringdon Lane
London EC1R 3AU
Tel: 01-253 2001
Editorial: 01-253 2003
Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London EC1
©1984 Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd and contributors
Published and distributed by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd

Subscriptions: Lesley Bridgmount, Cecilia Milton
Circulation: Liz Cooper, Tim Freeman
Display advertisements: Michael Roberts 01-253 2001
Classified advertisements: Laura Berryman, David Jones 01-251 5487

Subscription Rates
Surface mail:
UK £32, Overseas £36

Air mail:
Europe £36, Middle East £41, Africa, India, South America £45, Australasia, Far East £49, USA $79, Canada $92

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New Statesman

Vol 108 No 2782 13 July 1984

Mrs Thatcher at bay

IT IS NOW four and a half months since the miners' overtime ban drifted into becoming in effect a national coal strike. No one — except Arthur Scargill in what seemed at the time to be rhetorical flights of fancy — predicted that it would go on so long. When it started, suggestions that the National Coal Board was prepared to sit the dispute out until the winter were a measure of how weak the miners' tactical position seemed to be. Now the realisation that the dispute could still be going on into the autumn (by which time power station coal stocks will be very low and power cuts very likely, see this issue, page 4) is beginning seriously to undermine the government's resolve.

Responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities rests squarely with the Prime Minister. The National Union of Mineworkers occupies a particular position of honour in the demonology of the Tory Party. Ever since she came to office, Mrs Thatcher has wanted to cut the NUM down in size and to claim the expected political credit for doing so. In 1974 Edward Heath asked the question 'Who governs Britain?' and lost. She has always wanted to pose the same question on her terms.

Thus under her direct influence there has been strong government pressure on the electricity industry to press on with a nuclear programme, even though falling demand projections no longer make sense of the huge capital costs involved and there remain serious questions about safety. One of her very first acts as Prime Minister was an official visit to France, where she spent most of the time not talking to the President in Paris, but in inspecting the French nuclear programme in the South.

The same motive of reducing the vulnerability of the Central Electricity Generating Board to industrial action by the miners led the government to insist that as many coal-fired power stations as possible should have expensive dual oil-fired capacity as well and to resist any suggestions of new coal-fired stations, even though the economic case was strong. And then, finally, Mrs Thatcher brought Ian McGregor as chairman of the NCB to be her personally selected hatchet man.

OF COURSE on the other side Arthur Scargill wanted a confrontation as well. So did the younger militants in Scotland, Yorkshire and Kent. But they would never have been able to turn the long overtime ban into a national strike, if it had not been for the mixture of provocation and incompetence with which MacGregor pushed forward his plans for cutting down the industry and with which the rest of the NCB management carried out his bidding.

People in a position to make comparisons say that coal has long been the most incompetently managed of all the major nationalised industries. On Monday, the *Guardian* carried an unusually candid admission from the NCB's northern area director, David Archibald. The Board, he said, had lost its credibility. Such truths are not usually extracted from senior management in the middle of a dispute.

There is as yet no sign that the government and its mouthpiece MacGregor are seriously looking for a quick solution to the dispute, though the secret negotiations are still scheduled to continue next week. As we said in May, the only basis on which the NUM could now even contemplate calling off the strike would be a withdrawal of the plan unilaterally announced in the most provocative possible way by MacGregor in March to cut output by 4 million tonnes, close 20 pits and lose 20,000 jobs. In its place would have to come a new agreed plan for coal into the 1990s, with economically sensible criteria for how long existing pits should be kept in production — in place of the narrow accountant's figuring based on arbitrary cash limits for the industry this year and next and which have been used to provoke the present crisis.

As with any war that does not lead to unconditional surrender by one side or the other, there are political and psychological barriers to reaching a compromise peace settlement. Everyone who is properly concerned about the longterm future of the British coal industry and about trying to reach a rational energy policy for the British economy knows that a compromise involving the government with the NCB and the NUM will have to be reached in the end.

BUT THE PRIME Minister is not interested yet in solutions that will have to be reached in the end. She is concerned about what any sign of 'weakness' on her part would do to her image in the country and her authority in her party. She is right to be worried because she has begun to look and sound like a shrill figure, bunkered and alone in Downing Street, out of touch with political reality. It has happened before to Prime Ministers after they have been in office for a year or two and things begin to go wrong.

The miners' strike has become for Mrs Thatcher the domestic equivalent of a Falklands. Now as then the crisis has come at a time when the Prime Minister's personal standing is low and falling. Now as then everyone knows that in the end a compromise and negotiated settlement is inevitable. Now as then the Prime Minister, ignoring advice to the contrary, has gone for a high risk policy, regardless of the costs.

These costs are now rising dramatically. The government, one way or another, will have to pay the cost of higher priced energy for the CEGB and the policing and legal costs involved in turning whole parts of the country into something approaching a police state. In terms of damage to the national economy these costs, though, will be dwarfed by the consequences of a prolonged national dock strike — which clearly took the government completely by surprise. Scargill, in short, has become for Mrs Thatcher the 1984 equivalent of General Galtieri — an opponent to be defeated at no matter what cost because she believes that even the suggestion of compromise would be politically damaging to her and anything that looked like backing down absolutely fatal. Her insistence on total war, in which the heads of the energy industries — supposedly independent — are pressed into her service is not the least cause of the readiness of dockers and seafarers to resist the expansion of 'her' war onto their ground.

So long as a Prime Minister sits in Downing Street stuck in that position, there will be no progress. The miners have gone through their pain threshold and can now probably last the dispute out as long as the government. There will only be progress when, faced with the facts, Mrs Thatcher changes her position and tells her Energy Secretary to begin to negotiate about the future output levels and managerial style of the NCB, involving incidentally the fairly rapid retirement of MacGregor. It would be a U-turn and politically difficult for Mrs Thatcher to handle. In some situations, if you don't make a U-turn you hit a brick wall. □

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Power cuts likely as coal stock lies exposed

SINCE THE beginning of the miners' strike the government has made only the most laconic comments on the size of coal stocks and the possibility of power cuts.

However, figures released in the June edition of *Energy Trends*, the official publication of the Department of Energy, show the speed of the decline of the coal stocks. The evidence totally contradicts the government's picture of vast stocks lasting well into 1985. If the strike does not end soon, the government will have to impose power cuts in late August or early September — or introduce military-style measures to try to move coal to power stations from pit-head stocks.

Energy Trade gives figures for the stocks held at power stations at the beginning and end of April and how much coal was actually burned at power stations during the month. From this, the amount of new coal arriving at power stations from non-striking pits can be calculated: 1.29 million tonnes, much less than suggested in some newspapers.

The trend since April can be extrapolated using the last two years' monthly figures for the amount of coal burned, and making informed assumptions about coal deliveries and the effect of the switch to oil-fired power stations. Coal deliveries from Notts and elsewhere continued at a rate of 322,000 tonnes per week during May and June but action by the rail unions has probably reduced this to 250,000. The amount of coal saved by the switch to oil-fired power stations must also be taken into account.

In April 1984, the extra oil used was 1.53 million tonnes of coal equivalent, compared with previous years. This rate has probably increased somewhat due to the exceptional measures being adopted by the CEGB (an estimate was made in the *Financial Times*, 1 June which is used in the table below).

The table shows that by the end of September, the stocks will be perilously close to what the CEGB admit is the critical level — six million tonnes. Below that, chaotic and unplanned disconnections might occur.

Of course this is not to say that they *will* occur in August or September. Since the government and CEGB have so strongly denied Scargill's claim to that effect, they cannot be seen to have been deliberately misinforming the public and they will probably have to take the risk of postponing the power cuts. They will also be trying to work out how they can get the 21.9 million tonnes of coal stocked at the pits transported to the power stations.

Recently some stockbrokers (James Capel) have treated this massive exercise in logistics as a mere formality. They have talked about the CEGB having access to both distributed and undistributed stocks as though there was no major difference between them, which is the origin of the claim that stocks will last until the spring. It is doubtful that even the army could move sufficient coal to the power stations in the short time between the government's final admission that all is not well on the energy front, and the catastrophic unplanned disconnections of large sections of industry, public services and domestic housing which will otherwise occur in the early autumn. Prospects for candle-makers may yet be bright.

Ian Rutledge

1984	Stock at beginning of month	Coal delivered to power stations	Normal coal burn	Coal equivalent of extra oil used	Stock at end of month
May	19.94	+ 1.29	- (5.89	- 1.91)	= 17.25
June*	17.25	+ 1.61	- (6.7	- 1.87)	= 14.03
July	14.03	+ 1.00	- (4.99	- 2.08)	= 12.12
August	12.12	+ 1.00	- (5.01	- 2.08)	= 10.19
September*	10.19	+ 1.25	- (6.83	- 1.75)	= 6.36
October	6.36	+ 1.00	- (6.19	- 1.75)	= 2.92

The figures are adjusted to the Department of Energy system of standard four and five months. Asterisked months are five weeks.

Hiving off needy kids

The Advisory Centre for Education, a parents' pressure group, is calling for a government investigation into England's 1,561 special schools.

More than 125,000 children (1.5 per cent of pupils) attend the three types of special schools — for pupils with physical handicaps, 'learning difficulties' (until 1981 called ESN schools), or 'behavioural problems'.

The 1981 Education Act placed an obligation on local education authorities (LEAs) 'wherever possible' to integrate special school pupils into ordinary schools. This followed the Warnock report, which said that children with learning difficulties or physical handicaps would usually perform better, academically and socially, if allowed to mix with 'normal' children. But because of the administrative and financial problems associated with integration, the Act accepted that it would not be possible in some areas.

Nevertheless LEAs are supposed to be 'working towards integration' or at least providing special schools with the same services as ordinary schools. ACE believes that many of them fall down on both counts.

Little is known about special schools because the main official source of information, Her Majesty's Inspectorate, has made only 16 inspections in the last two years. Nick Doyle of ACE has written to the senior inspector, Eric Bolton, demanding more inspections and a change in inspectors' terms of reference so that the LEAs' approach to special eduction is investigated as much as the performance of individual schools.

On the basis of the 16 published reports, and of complaints made by parents to ACE, Doyle says that there are five major areas of concern.

- Special schools invariably miss out on LEA curriculum initiatives — for example, those concerned with multi-cultural education.
- Lack of access to support services available to ordinary schools. In ILEA, pupils at special schools receive no assistance from the authority's much praised 'English as a second language' unit (see *NS* 22 June).
- The curriculum is invariably restricted. This is especially so with science, and computers are virtually unknown in special schools.
- Because of the wide variations in age and ability the schools have difficulty in meeting the needs of individual children. Age ranges vary from school to school but it is common to find a span from 5 to 16 and, in some cases, from 2½ to 16.
- There is a gross imbalance between the number of boys and girls in the majority of schools, especially those catering for 'maladjusted' children.

Support for ACE has come from Mark Vaughan of the Spastics Society who has made an extensive study of LEA's attitude to special education. He admits that there are many problems with special schools but says that they are still needed because so many LEAs are dragging their feet over the 1981 legislation and are making no attempt to integrate.

Barry Hugill

Brittan stops wet shelters for drunks

POLICE, coroners, magistrates and probation officers are united in calling for special facilities for drunks picked up on the streets. But, so far, the Home Office has refused to provide funds for such schemes which could be life savers for the drunks who die from choking on their own vomit in police cells.

Nor are drunks the only victims of the Home Office's penny-pinching. Others thought by police to be drunk are sometimes suffering from potentially fatal injuries or diseases. One in five deaths in custody in 1982 involved people with head injuries arrested for drunkenness, according to figures taken from police reports.

The most recent case was that of James Sullivan, an ex-customs and excise officer from London's East End, who died of head injuries sustained falling downstairs in a bus, after spending seven hours in a police cell without seeing a doctor. The jury at the inquest on Saturday (7 July) pointed to the 'absence of a suitable caring agency'.

Police stations are not equipped to deal with drunks and police officers are not qualified to diagnose accidents or illness which show similar symptoms to drunkenness.

Home Secretary Leon Brittan dismissed 'wet shelters', the cheapest and most basic type of facility, in February, quoting the Trinity Centre experiment in Birmingham. He told the All Party Penal Affairs Group: 'It is doubtful whether — judged solely on the basis of their success in diverting offenders from the criminal justice system and bringing recoverable savings from other agencies — they could ever be cost effective.'

Funding to such projects is being cut off. The St Dismas Society, a Southampton alcohol rehabilitation organisation, received notice on 8 June that they would not receive a £30,000 grant agreed 'in principle' by the Home Office last year as part of the funding for a 'community drying out centre'.

Two reasons for the change of mind were given by the Home Office — the Trinity wet shelter experience and *the success of a trial cautioning* system, now in operation throughout the country, whereby drunks are not taken to court but cautioned after sobering up in a police cell.

Cautioning saves money by cutting court and police time but it cannot save lives. Cell deaths almost always occur before a person is sober enough to be charged or cautioned or because of a delay in summoning medical help.

Rosalind Bayley

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Mass pickets for Asians on strike

TWO MASS pickets last week outside Kewal Brothers, a Birmingham garment factory, have boosted the morale of the 15 Asian workers on strike since 16 May.

On Thursday they were joined on the picket line by mainly Asian workers from factories throughout the city and on Friday a coachload of Staffordshire miners came to show their support.

These were the first real signs of trade union solidarity for the strikers who, until last Friday, had not received strike pay from their union, the TGWU. During the last two months, they have also faced continual police harassment.

The 15 workers constituted almost the entire workforce of Kewal Brothers where wages were as low as £25 for a 58-hour week. In early 1983, the management signed an informal union agreement with the TGWU but postponed formalising it.

This May, Kewal Singh Chauhan, the owner, told three workers that he was short of work and told them to take redundancy or go on to sewing garments at piece work rates. They refused, having had no experience of sewing. The other employees suggested sharing out the work but instead Kewal said they should all go on piece work. In response, the workers began their strike by occupying the building for the day. Next morning the police stopped them from going in. Since then the workers have all been sacked and scabs brought in.

Police action has been consistently pro-management. On 29 May a worker was arrested on the picket line allegedly for assaulting the owner and scratching his car, but he was released without charge. On 12 June he was visited at home by the police and taken to Piddock Road police station. He claims that he was questioned about the role of other workers in the strike. He was then again released without being charged. Also on 29 May, shop steward Rajinder Kumar was attacked with a shovel by one of the management and had to be treated for head injuries.

On Thursday four people were arrested including Rajinder Kumar and an Asian woman who was injured in the process. They were taken to Thornhill Road police station in Handsworth and charged with public order offences.

Amrit Wilson

Womb not one's own

'IT'S BETTER off in the bucket, dear'. That advice evokes the image of a private doctor persuading an uncertain patient to have an unnecessary operation — usually a hysterectomy. The same attitude now seems to have penetrated NHS practice.

A survey of hysterectomies performed at a hospital in East Kilbride outside Glasgow shows the number of operations doubled in a decade for no apparent reason. A hysterectomy is often the solution to a wide variety of gynaecological complaints ranging from excess menstrual bleeding to 'pelvic pain'.

In East Kilbride no abnormality was found in over half the operations performed in 1980, compared to a quarter in 1970. According to John Grand, a consultant at the hospital, 'this shows clearly that gynaecologists are performing hysterectomies more freely'.

The rise is all the more surprising as during the same period several new drugs became available for treating gynaecological illnesses. And the side-effects of the operation have not been properly considered. A third of women suffer from depression after having a hysterectomy and the operation also increases the risk of heart disease by a factor of between two and a half and five.

Though the survey only covered one hospital, Grant believes 'there is no reason to suppose that it is in any way atypical'.

James Lefanu

MISCELLANY

Sporting life

This Tuesday's *Sun* contains a suitably ferocious copyright warning on its exclusive revelations by John McEnroe: 'This article is the copyright of the *Sun* and John McEnroe. Any unauthorised breach of this copyright will lead to legal proceedings. Our lawyers are watching.' The *Sun*'s lawyers may be watching, but that didn't stop *Sun* reporter Ian Todd writing in December 1982 that ex-England Test cricketer Graham Gooch had said 'I couldn't care less about England'. This week the High Court ruled that the 'exclusive' interview had never taken place and that the article was purely a conglomeratio... [illegible]what the paper thought must have been Gooch's feelings. Gooch was awarded £25,000 damages for libel.

Messenger service

Environmental pressure group Greenpeace deserves a medal for its services to Her Majesty's Government, although HMG is more inclined to call the police. Last year Greenpeace alerted the government and the public to the leakage of radioactive effluent from the Windscale (now Sellafield) nuclear plant. Last month it performed a more pedestrian but equally valuable service. Greenpeace director Pete Wilkinson congratulated Mr McIntosh, the head of the UK delegation to an international conference on marine pollution in Oslo, on the UK's last-minute decision to support a resolution urging a policy of 'zero discharge' targets for nuclear plants like Sellafield. Mr McIntosh looked blank, and was surprised to learn that Wilkinson had a letter from Environment Minister William Waldegrave saying the British delegation had been 'instructed' to support the resolution. He knew nothing about it, he said. In the end the British delegation did support the resolution.

Anyone out there?

The Ministry of Defence has resorted to a bit of trendy illegality to push its recruitment propaganda at its target youth audience. In April listeners to Radio Jackie — a well-established but nevertheless pirate radio station in south London — were astonished to hear themselves invited to play their part in the Territorial Army's defence of the realm. Our mole at the TA advises us that these adverts had official sanction from MoD apparatchiks. The 'pirates' apparently pay income tax and VAT, and even took two MSC-sponsored trainees for a week. All they don't have is a licence to broadcast.

Parish pomp

Andrew McIntosh, who was Labour leader of the GLC for just a few hours before being deposed in what the right-wing press called a 'palace coup' by Ken Livingstone, is waiting in the wings to get his own back. Lord McIntosh (as he now is) is expected to seize the chance to reintroduce his parish councils Bill if and when the government's Bill to abolish the GLC and Met countries is brought in in the next parliament. As parish councils spokesperson John Clark put it, 'since the government is abolishing one tier of government, there's no reason why it shouldn't offer Londoners the chance to have another one'. Lord McIntosh's Bill, which has just passed through the House of Lords but is expected to founder in the Commons, would give Londoners the right — which currently only people outside the metropolis have — to set up parish councils. Clark is secretary of the National Association of Local Councils, which represents 7,500 parish, town and community councils and claims, outrageously, to be the 'largest local authority association in the world'. A parish council can be formed wherever it has the support of 20 per cent of the electorate, to run limited local services such as street lighting and playing fields. But what if the other 80 per cent would rather have the GLC?

Same old story

The *Sunday Times* is very pleased that its circulation has gone up since the launch of the new-look *Sunday Times Magazine*, and said so on its front page two weeks ago. It claimed that this had added 100,000 a week to its circulation, up from 1,268,000 in April to 1,368,000 in May. In fact the *Sunday Times* has been a success ever since new editor Andrew 'Two Chauffeurs' Neil took over last October, because it ran a very similar article on its front page in December, claiming that the circulation was rising 'month by month'. By November it had risen to 1,338,000. It then clearly rose, month by month, to 1,268,000 in April. This is an exclusive Miscellany prediction: this December the *Sunday Times* will run a front page puff for itself giving the impression of a constantly rising circulation and quoting a rise from a figure somewhere below 1.3 million to somewhere a little above.

Scripture lesson

Some pretty acid things are being said about the *Daily Telegraph*'s science correspondent, Adrian Berry. In March he wrote an article under the heading 'Acid rain theory may be wrong, scientists admit' quoting the work of two Swedish professors to demonstrate that acid rain is not caused by industrial emissions. Unfortunately for Berry, the scientists' work demonstrates nothing of the sort. In a forthcoming issue of *Acid Magazine*, Professor Troedsson of the Agricultural University in Uppsala fumes: 'The article in the *Daily Telegraph* does not correspond at all with our actual statements. The person who wrote it has quoted from our article as the Devil quotes scripture. They have pulled isolated statements out of their context and then drawn their own conclusions — we have been treated dishonourably.' Berry is not likely to get the sack, however. He's the son of the *Telegraph*'s proprietor, Lord Hartwell.

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Carlos Guarita

Ashford remand centre: no room to move

Britain's unchanged prisoners

WHEN Tousik Benriassa was arrested two weeks ago because of a deportation order issued in July 1983, it was a complete surprise to him. Not only had he never been informed about the order, but he has actually been negotiating with the Home Office over the past year to try to stay in the country.

What happens to people like Benriassa is the subject of *Immigration Prisoners*, a report published by the Runnymede Trust this week, which documents conditions for deportees inside Britain's prisons.

The report is particularly damning about the Ashford Remand Centre where Benriassa is being held. Prisoners there complain of overcrowding and of being locked up for excessive amounts of time. Unlike other prisoners, there are no facilities for exercise.

Each year about 1,000 people are being imprisoned for allegedly transgressing the immigration laws and at any one time about 200 people are locked up in Harmondsworth (near London Airport), Ashford or prisons like Pentonville and Brixton.

In an effort to pre-empt publicity generated by the Runnymede Trust, the Home Office held open days at Ashford and Harmondsworth for the media last week. But cases like Benriassa's make any attempt at public relations seem futile.

Benriassa came to Britain from Algeria in 1981 and stayed on after the expiry of his two month visa. In 1982, he was found guilty of working illegally but the court did not recommend deportation. This year, he married a British woman with whom he had been living for some time in Hampstead, North London, and they now have a three-month-old baby. Following his marriage, he applied to stay in Britain.

Kamal Desor of Camden Community Law Centre, which has been representing Benriassa, said this week that an immigration officer interviewed him in April this year but did not mention the deportation order. 'The immigration officer even said "good luck with your application to the Home Office" at the end of the interview', said Mr Desor.

A Home Office spokesperson had been informed of the deportation order during the interview. The Home Office also claimed that the marriage was one of convenience and that Benriassa did not live with his wife, Sally. In fact at the time of Benriassa's arrest, Sally was staying with her mother temporarily.

The Law Centre was angry that they had not been informed of the order until after his arrest and believe that even the officials dealing with the case were unaware of the deportation order.

His fate now rests on an appeal to the Home Secretary which is backed by MP Frank Dobson.

Martin Brown

Militant line unites hit list councils — so far

THE CELEBRATIONS of Labour local authority leaders, following the government's caving in to Liverpool's militants and the 'massive outbreak of unity' at the Labour party's local government conference in Sheffield last week-end, may be cut short when the hit list of authorities for rate-capping is published on 26 July.

The Sheffield meeting, which only had the status of a non-decision making 'consultative conference', was a resounding success for the militant line, exhibited in different styles by amongst others, Ted Knight of Lambeth, David Blunkett of Sheffield and Margaret Hodge of Islington. There was extensive, but not unanimous agreement for the strategy of making a budget but not setting a rate. This will force a rapid confrontation with the government. Dick Knowles of Birmingham was the main dissenter, but Birmingham is unlikely to be on the hit list.

Liverpool's successful use of the tactic can only further encourage Labour authorities to hold the line. But there are several potential sources of trouble:

- Authorities not on the hit list will be reluctant to take any potentially confrontational action, particularly if they do not face massive rate rises, even though they may on next year's list.
- The upper tier authorities (county councils) are legally obliged to set a rate by 10 March which means that their strategy has to be different — deficit spending rather than not setting a budget, which postpones the crunch until well into the 1985/6 financial year.
- Will Labour Groups be able to stand firm given the potential risks of surcharge and disqualification?
- Labour's front bench spokesmen, Jack Straw and John Cunningham, are known not to want to appear confrontational, although in private at the conference Straw conceded the need for some kind of non-compliance.
- Several authorities like Lambeth will have balances at the end of 1985, allowing them to fudge while others like Haringey and Islington will have no alternative but to defy the legislation.

Despite all this, the conference was a success, unlike other efforts at working out united strategies against previous central government measures between the idiosyncratic and heteregeneous councils. But, at this stage, as one leader confided, it is very much a campaign which rests on the belief that the legislation can be seen off unused. If it can't, the unity may prove illusory, but given that the government conceded to Liverpool fighting on its own, will it matter?

Stewart Lansley and Christian Wolmar

£30,000 cost for asbestos libel case

ALAN DALTON, author of a standard book on fighting the hazards of asbestos and the book's publishers, BSSRS Publications, face bankruptcy after losing a libel action this week.

On Monday, a High Court jury awarded damages of just £500 to Dr Robert Murray, an independent consultant on occupational health, after he claimed he had been libelled in Dalton's book, *Asbestos — Killer Dust*. But the court costs may turn out to be as high as £30,000 for the two week case.

Lawyers acting for Murray successfully asked the judge, Mr Justice Comyn, to make Dalton and the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science (BSSRS) liable for the costs on top of the modest damages award.

The judge also granted an injunction against the section of the book dealing with Murray. Howard Lederman, barrister for the publishers, says this will mean that the relevant pages will have to be torn out of copies of the book before they are sold.

Dalton's book has become the prime source of information for workers and community groups fighting the hazards of asbestos. It describes the diseases — asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma — caused by exposure. As well as telling people how to spot asbestos, it documents cases in which these illnesses have been caused by the substance.

One of these is described in the book as 'the massacre at Hebden Bridge', where 12 per cent of workers at the Cape Industries asbestos mill contracted absestos-related diseases. At the time Dalton's book was published in 1979, 77 former workers at the mill had died of these illnesses.

The contested pages in the book dealt in highly critical terms with the career of Murray, who inspected the mill in 1949 and 1952 when he was medical inspector of factories for the government. At the hearing, his lawyers claimed the book suggested that Murray was in the pay of the asbestos industry, and that this influenced his views.

Dalton, who conducted his own defence, denied making the allegation and said the book merely suggested Dr Murray has consistently underestimated the health effects of asbestos. Lederman said Murray had never recommended prosecution of the factory although he admitted in court that it had broken the regulations.

The dilemma for the jury, said the judge, was 'did Mr Dalton, when obviously hitting out around him, go to that point of suggesting professional dishonesty or did he merely go to the point of saying Dr Murray was open to very heavy criticism indeed for his opinions about asbestos?'

By an 11-1 majority, the jury found that Dalton had libelled Murray. Murray's lawyers had said during the case that he sought to clear his name rather than gain substantial damages but they pressed for the costs.

Dalton says he has no means of paying and may be bankrupted by the case. The publisher, BSSRS Publications Ltd, expects to go out of business.

Joan Smith

A Killer Dust Appeal Fund has been set up by the People's Asbestos Action Campaign, c/o The London Hazards Centre, Polytechnic of the South Bank, 103 Borough Road, London SE1.

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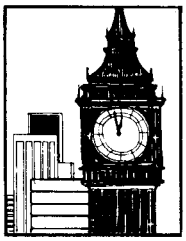

PETER KELLNER Political Editor

Is Labour serious about ending poverty?

THE SOLUTION of almost any social problem requires, at the minimum, three things: political will, sufficient money and intellectual effort. Even when all three are present, reform *may* fail; but in the absence of any of them, reform is *bound* to fail.

In their attempts to end poverty, Labour governments have usually been deficient in all three: they have lacked the determination to create greater equality; they have failed to supply the resources to achieve it; worst, they have never worked out in coherent detail how to set about ending poverty, should the will and money become available. There have been policies by the cartload: but when it comes to tackling the complexities of the various tax and benefits systems, eliminating the poverty trap and so on, the old horse takes one look at the fence and refuses to jump.

Last year's Labour election manifesto, which on almost everything else contained enough promises to last most parties a generation, contained this cop-out paragraph:

> Forty years have elapsed since the Beveridge report which led to the setting up of the National Insurance scheme by the post-war Labour government. We shall conduct a thorough review of the scheme in the light of today's circumstances.

Given the impact of the recession, the accumulation of past absurdities and humiliating procedures affecting benefits claimants, and Labour's fundamental purpose as a party dedicated to achieving greater equality of wealth and power, it is hard to conceive of a more frivolous statement than 'we shall conduct a thorough review in the light of today's circumstances'. It suggests one or both of two things: a political failure to devise a programme on which the party can agree, and/or an intellectual failure to devise a programme that might work. Either way it is — or should be — a scandal.

This week sees the publication of what may come to be seen as the most important book to be written during the lifetime of the present Parliament. *The Reform of Social Security*, by Andrew Dilnot, John Kay and Nick Morris of the Institute for Fiscal Studies[1], strips bare the way our system of income tax, national insurance and social security and other benefits screws almost everything up. It shows how the full-blown Beveridge concept of social insurance could never work, and how, every time the balloon threatened to burst, a fresh piece of sticking plaster was placed over the hole.

In retrospect, the appearance of the poverty trap in the 1970s should have taken nobody by surprise: it was the inevitable consequence of piling means-tested benefit upon benefit at the same time as bringing more and more working people into the income tax net. One day it was bound to happen that some people would lose money from a pay rise, because deductions in the form of extra taxes and national insurance paid, combined with progressive loss of benefits, would exceed the pay rise.

We are now suffering from an equally inevitable political backlash. Fed by stories in right-wing papers about 'scroungers', large sections of the electorate have turned against social security claimants. While public spending on health and education is popular, spending on cash benefits is not. And in some ways it is hard to contest this view: the system, as it stands, is ludicrous. The result, however, is that the present government, under the guise of 'reviewing' various social security payments, is preparing to visit yet further retribution on the poor. An invaluable fact pack on the reviews, prepared by the Child Poverty Action Group[2], details what the government is up to.

For the moment, it must be said, Labour has no effective answer. We cannot defend what the government is attacking, for the system we bequeathed in 1979 was indefensible. Yet, as last year's election manifesto showed, we have no worked-out alternative. The party listed two dozen commitments to spend more money — but as for the framework of the system itself, merely promised 'a thorough review'. Voters were behaving not altogether irrationally when they responded: 'pull the other one'.

WHAT THIS WEEK's new book demonstrates is that the reform of social security is a perfectly feasible ambition. It will, of course, require enormous political skill and commitment. It is also a complex business, requiring simultaneous action on a number of fronts. *But the essential strategic decisions are quite straightforward.* They are tough, in the sense that harsh choices must be made; but following the publication of *The Reform of Social Security* they are no longer theoretically difficult.

As anyone who has studied the social security system for a while knows, the trick is to simplify it so that it becomes more logical and easier to understand and operate. As anyone who has studied the system for a bit longer knows, simplification creates two awkward problems. First, it was thought that unless enormous sums of money were spent, there would be politically unacceptable examples of 'rough justice' — individuals who would do worse under the new system than the old and who would attract publicity for their plight.

The second problem is that there is a fundamental dilemma about dealing with poverty. For any given level of overall spending on benefits, the higher the poverty safety net, the greater the marginal 'tax' rate (including loss of benefit) for those immediately above the poverty line. *The Reform of Social Security* largely solves the first problem, and defines in a bright, harsh light the second.

The authors propose scrapping the present system of income tax allowances, national insurance payments and social security benefits and replacing them with two kinds of 'credit' — tax credits (replacing tax allowances) and benefit credits (replacing social security benefits). Both are lump-sum payments that decline as income rises: by taxation or by a 'withdrawal rate' for benefits.

Integrating the tax and benefits system in this way has a number of advantages. It would be simpler both for the government to operate and for citizens to use. Sensibly designed it could avoid the anomalies of the poverty trap. Best of all, given the reluctance of politicians to undertake reforms that leave poor people even worse off, the authors show how their streamlined system could closely mimic the present pattern of income distribution, while accruing all the advantages of simplification.

The significance of this is not that the present distribution pattern is in any way correct; but if the tax-benefits system is to be simplified *and* made more progressive, it is a vital starting point — for the system can then be amended to produce the greatest benefit to people who need money most, without unintentionally helping other people who need the state's help less. All previous proposals for reform have foundered on the problem that the only way both to simplify the system and to help the poor is to throw at millions of families enormous sums of money, some of which sticks to the better off.

Even if all this is accepted, the second, more fundamental problem of fighting poverty remains. It is impossible to design a system that ensures a decent, minimum standard of living for everybody *and* provides for a low tax-and-withdrawal rate for those people whose incomes are just above the poverty line. The more that is given to the poorest, the more those benefits have to be tapered away for those with slightly higher incomes. (In the extreme, with everyone earning an identical post-tax income, the tax-and-withdrawal rate is 100 per cent for all.)

That, ultimately, is the political and moral problem Labour has yet to face. It needs guts and intellectual honesty to do so — not 'a thorough review of the scheme in the light of today's circumstances'. □

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1. Published by the Clarendon Press, £10 hardback, £3.95 paperback.
2. Available from CPAG, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2.

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LEGAL PROFESSION

Law unto themselves

As they approach their AGM, the solicitors' own professional body is in disarray. Tim Tate looks at the scandals and changes that are undermining their standing

BEHIND THE greying facade of No. 113 Chancery Lane, home of The Law Society, the mahogany panelling, deep pile carpeting and leather chesterfields creat the ambiance of a particularly tranquil gentlemen's club.

For the first time in The Law Society's 160-year history that calm is about to be shattered; at last solicitors are revolting against how their society deals with complaints from the public against solicitors themselves.

The catalyst for what promises to be the most bitter and divided annual general meeting ever, on 19 July, is 'the Glanville Davies affair'. Davies, a provincial solicitor was struck off in October by the High Court for gross misconduct. The Law Society had repeatedly failed to take any disciplinary action against him, a member of its own ruling Council for 15 years, despite evidence of apparent negligence and grossly-inflated bills.

After several months' disastrous publicity, the Society published the findings of two investigations into its handling of the complaints against Davies. Both were severely critical, and in March, Chancery Lane promised to put its house in order.

But it merely spawned ever more serious complaints, to the point that the Council will face a motion to sack itself for its actions at the AGM. The Society is rightly worried: the mood inside the profession is rebellious and unpredictable, provoked by knowledge that only half of the Glanville Davies affair has yet been dealt with, and that it is far from alone.

Glanville Davies was first consulted by Leslie Parsons, a Welsh bottler of cockles and mussels on 26 June 1970. He was to sue a solicitor called Christopher John Malim, also a former Council member. Malim had been acting for Parsons since 1967 in a commercial breach of contract case. It had emerged that Mr Malim had secretly met the managing director of the company he was supposed to be suing on Mr Parson's behalf, and apparently negotiated to defeat his own client.

Mr Malim's secretary had mistakenly sent Mr Parsons internal letters backing this. Mr Parsons made a formal complaint to The Law Society. That complaint was received in June 1970 complete with detailed evidence. For almost 14 years, from 1970 to 1984, The Law Society failed to open a file on the complaint, even during the height of the Glanville Davies publicity. In February it at last promised action. Since then the Society's only move has been to refer all queries on the case to its own solicitors.

What made Mr Parsons's position unusual was neither the scope nor nature of his complaints: it was the publicity.

Miss Betty Burke Hayward's case makes sadder reading. A remedial teacher from North London, Miss Hayward let her flat to an apparently wealthy aristocrat, the Vicomte de Borenden, in April 1972. Borenden, was in fact, a well-established conman originally named Rick Morley-Morley with a string of convictions for fraud and two undischarged bankruptcies behind him. He proceeded to con Miss Hayward out of £1,100 which she had raised through a second mortgage on the flat and got an injunction preventing her from re-entering her home. Apparently penitent, he later phoned Miss Hayward and said he was leaving the flat. When she returned to it, his solicitor promptly reported to the court that she had broken the terms of the injunction.

Miss Hayward was sent to Holloway prison in October 1973 for four days for contempt of court. She was not represented at the contempt hearing because The Law Society refused her legal aid on the ground that she should not have broken the injunction. When she emerged from prison she had only the clothes she wore. Everything else she owned was in the flat — from which she was barred by the injunction.

The solicitor who obtained and enforced the injunction was Anthony Steven Feldman, of A.S. Feldman & Co., Gloucester Place, W1. Mr Feldman failed to tell the courts that Morley-Morley, known as Borenden, and a string of other names, was facing both civil and criminal proceedings relating to the flat, and that he was an undischarged bankrupt and so barred from taking court action. Disclosure of these facts — which is required by law — would have ruled out any injunction immediately.

Miss Hayward finally got the matter before Deputy Judge Beldam (now Mr Justice Beldam) in 1975 — more than a year after her imprisonment. Beldam was highly critical of both Morley-Morley and Feldman — whose claim he did not know of his client's legal status Beldam rejected. Morley-Morley appealed to Lord Denning, then Master of the Rolls. Denning backed Beldam and demanded Feldman be brought before the court. At this hearing, Denning said: 'The circumstances in which this order for committal (to prison) came to be made are such that this court ought to enquire into them. What I feel we must do is to order that the solicitor who was responsible . . . should give an explanation . . . notice should be given to Mr Feldman to show cause why he should not personally pay the costs of those proceedings'.

Denning stated that The Law Society should grant Miss Hayward legal aid so she could bring Mr Feldman to court. That was in December 1975. Mr Feldman was never brought before Lord Denning's court. The Law Society denied Miss Hayward legal aid for the case from 1975 until last year. They then granted her a certificate to allow counsel's opinion to be sought. Counsel advised that the case was 'out of time' — barred from going to court because more than six years had elapsed since Denning's order.

In desperation, Miss Hayward applied to The Law Society for compensation out of the Compensation Fund — the Society's com-

Joanne O'Brien/Format

Betty Burke Hayward today: bitter experience of the law

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Law Society

Michael Hoyle: public relations

pulsory insurance scheme every practising solicitor pays into. The Society refused the application on 11 May this year on various grounds, including that the courts would have to discipline Mr Feldman before any grant could be made. The Society went on to point out that Mr Feldman had never been the subject of a Compensation Fund claim and was currently in good standing with the Society.

In fact, some months previously, the High Court had ordered Chancery Lane to open an investigation into Mr Feldman's handling of another client. If not a direct lie, the Society's 'good standing' comment was certainly misleading.

PART OF THE difficulty the public faces in getting The Law Society to police the profession, is in the narrow limits it sets for disciplinary hearings. Initial complaints go to the Professional Purposes department (know to the profession as 'the Mafia'). The department will reject any complaint that alleges negligence, on the grounds that the complainant must sue the solicitor and prove negligence before the Society can act. This disposes of a vast number of complaints.

In 1979 it set up the Negligence Panel Scheme. If a member of the public had a complaint that a solicitor was negligent, he or she would be referred to an approved solicitor who would give an hour's free legal advice on the merits of an action for negligence, and thereafter charge at normal rates to do anything about it. But in November 1980, in one of those mistakes that periodically embarrass the Society, the head of the Professional Purposes department mailed a letter he had written to a Panel solicitor who was to look into a complaint to a complainant instead.

In it, Michael Hoyle, Professional Purposes secretary, described the panels as 'partly a public relations exercise to dispel the argument that no solicitor is prepared to act in proceedings alleging professional negligence on the part of another solicitor. I have little doubt that the local profession have good reason for not assisting and it may well be that there is no evidence that professional negligence existed' — a clear pre-judgement of the complaint. No clearer indication of the worth of the panels has been forthcoming.

Peter and Sylvia Halligey, pensioners from Lymington, Hampshire, had their suspicions about the panel confirmed independently. They complained to The Law Society about the behaviour of their solicitor who had removed money from the Halligeys' client account to pay one of his partners' fees for another Halligey case while the bill was still in dispute. Taking money in this way is one area of misconduct The Law Society is prepared to deal with. Instead, the The Law Society told the Halligeys to sue their solicitor and advised them to apply for legal aid to do this. The legal aid section of The Law Society then turned them down because there were no grounds for a court action to be fought. Catch 22 in Chancery Lane.

But all of this, however representative of a serious malaise inside the Society, would not have been enough to force a showdown inside the profession. It is The Law Society's behaviour towards its own members that has lit the fuse. 'There has been pressure mounting for change inside the profession for some months now,' said Ole Hansen, director of the Legal Action Group, which monitors Society politics. 'That will make the AGM the most bitter and interesting for years.'

The demand for reform has several strands, in addition to the general belief that Chancery Lane's antics are giving solicitors a worse reputation than they can afford.

The first is again in the area of discipline: if the public has problems with the Professional Purposes department, lawyers themselves often get rough justice. Struck-off solicitors have a right of appeal direct to the Master of the Rolls who can reinstate them. But although strikings off are immediately published by the Society in its own journal, the *Gazette*, and wired to every major newspaper in the country, reinstatements never appear. Chancery Lane regards the Master of the Rolls's decision as 'domestic and confidential' and refuses to allow publication.

Then there is the sore question of money. The Legal Aid scheme is administered by Chancery Lane on behalf of the Lord Chancellor. The budget is massive (£200 million a year in civil cases alone), but solicitors are increasingly experiencing lengthy delays in payment for legal aid work. Roberta Tish has her own practice in East London doing almost exclusively legal aid work. She waited several months to receive payment of a £27,000 bill, surviving with the help of her bank.

Annet Asirwatham, a Sri-Lankan-born solicitor, wasn't so lucky. He was made bankrupt for £3,000 debts, while owed £6,000 in legal aid fees. It took five years for the fees to be sorted out, and by that time he had lost his house, his practising certificate, and his patience with The Law Society. The Professional Purposes department then imposed restrictions on his re-instated practising certificate — a solicitor's license to work — that would have stopped clients employing him without first seeking official permission. Last month, Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls, removed the restrictions, sharply criticising the Society.

Nor is his the only court to slap down The Law Society's activities. Last year a long, bitter and occasionally underhand campaign by Chancery Lane to put a stop to the growth of conveyancing agents failed in the courts. Many solicitors felt that the campaign to retain their own monopoly was unwise given the Thatcher government's views of State monopolies. In the face of clear government hints that they will not oppose the end of the monopoly The Law Society Council backed down and greeted the arrival of conveyancing agencies with an unconvincing enthusiasm.

Those parts of the profession dependent on conveyancing for a living were not pleased. But worse was to come: provincial solicitors in particular demanded equal corporate status to compete with the agencies, who could, and did, form limited companies. The Council dithered for months until Liverpool solicitors decided to set up a limited company and test the waters.

Immediately, Chancery Lane warned it would take action — solicitors are forbidden to form a limited company by law. Then, in an abrupt U-turn, the Council backed the formation of another limited company scheme in Sunderland and solemnly warned the Lord Chancellor of the dangers of not amending the law to allow limited companies for solicitors.

Nor is conveyancing the only area of inconsistency: after years of blocking bids by individual solicitors to advertise, the Council again changed course this Spring and backed a limited scheme.

After years of arbitrary and high-handed behaviour, the last year's appalling publicity and the sudden loss of automatic government protection has left The Law Society Council floundering for ways to retain their pre-eminent position. The motion to remove its members could well get through the AGM, leaving the Council itself either to vote the necessary ratification or cause an unprecedented constitutional crisis between Chancery Lane and the profession. With the government's sights elsewhere for the moment, it would be unwise for the Society to draw such attention to its already precarious position. □

COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

The Annual Report of the Commission for Racial Equality, 1983 is now available. It gives the general state of race relations throughout last year. The picture is a mixed one.

'The level of racial discrimination remains high. Its manifestations range from outright physical attack, which in some parts of our cities remains depressingly prevalent, to systematic discrimination in areas of employment, housing and services.'

However,

'The CRE's interest is not confined to the four and a half per cent of the population who identifiably belong to minority communities. Its interest is with the majority community too. If there are to be good relationships and progress towards eliminating racial discrimination, everyone must be involved.'

The Annual Report details all aspects of the Commission's work, the state of the law and factors affecting race relations in this country and is available from **The Commission for Racial Equality**, Elliot House, 10/12 Allington Street, London SW1E 5EH, price £1.00.

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Reviewing old masters

In the second of our occasional series on the traditions of Fabianism, Marxism and other strands in British political thought, Michèle Barrett looks at what they have made of feminism — and how feminists have argued back

IN THE CENTURY since the death of Marx and the founding of the Fabians we have seen feminism emerge as a significant political force. Yet feminist politics are so varied that at first sight both Marxism and Fabianism might seem to have been equally influential, if in different ways. Indeed some might say that these two political ideologies are only two of the many components — ranging from anarchism to classical liberalism — that are combined in modern feminism. Certainly one of the problems in trying to assess the influence of Marxism or Fabianism on feminism is that the women's movement contains a striking divergence of philosophies, tactics and lifestyles under this one heading.

Despite the differences, it is probably fair to generalise and say that very few feminists, even in the most pusillanimous sections of the equal opportunities establishment, would be impressed by the resounding complacency of this 1896 'Report on Fabian Policy': 'The Fabian Society accepts the conditions imposed on it by human nature and by the national character and political circumstances of the English people. It sympathises with the ordinary citizen's desire for gradual, peaceful changes. . .' And if we were to accept the accompanying view that our attitude should be 'perfectly constitutional' and our methods should be those 'usual in political life in England' it is hard to see that any feminist battle would ever have been won. Certainly the suffrage movement made a decisive break with this constitutionalism and a considerable amount of feminist activity — of which Greenham is the obvious contemporary example — has rejected it too.

It is probably also fair to say that Marxism has never really achieved the credibility among feminists in general that many socialist-feminists would wish it to have done. In a superficial way this is because Marx and Engels themselves, when they addressed the 'Working Men of England!' as they often did, really were talking to men rather than to men and women. By and large even those section of the women's movement that are not repelled by Marxism's revolutionary character have tended to be suspicious of a doctrine that has traditionally seen women as politically marginal. And of course a dominant tradition in feminism — the 'equal rights' position — has a history far removed from Marxism's revolutionary politics.

I want to argue, however, that both Fabianism and Marxism have had a significant influence on contemporary feminism, even if this is only because they have represented poles of analysis and tactics against which feminism has reacted. It has been in explicit disagreement with their priorities and methods of working that we have often seen a feminist position develop.

Various people have argued recently that Marxism has at its core a set of concepts — labour, wages etc — that are 'sex-blind', failing to acknowledge the significance of the sexual division of labour, and that this accounts for the difficulties in using Marxism for a feminist understanding of the world. Although in a general way this is true, I think it is more important that where Marx's concepts are *not* sex-blind they are unsatisfactory. There can be no doubt that Marx (and Engels too, though in many ways he was much more conscious of feminist issues) developed an analysis of capitalist society that is unable to deal with the specific situation of women as workers, unable to set out much of a critique of the way femininity and masculinity are defined, and unable to challenge the moral claims of the family other than by an attack on the 'bourgeois family'.

Many feminists have argued that no alliance between the women's movement and the labour movement will have much clout until the latter abandons once and for all its hankering for a 'family wage' which enables a man to support a wife and family. Yet unfortunately it is not only generations of labour representatives who appear to think that women and teenagers should get low wages because men with children need high ones — an argument which, as usual, ignores the fact that it is not only married men who have financial responsibilities for others. Much of Marx's own political work was geared to working men at the times when women were being excluded from the labour market and from the embryonic trade union movement. There can be no doubt that Marx did regard women as a source of cheap labour and a threat to male wages — for feminism, scarcely a useful point of view.

These arguments are quite well known now and it is possible to slide over them by saying that had Marx been alive now his general attitude would have been supportive to liberationary movements such as feminism and anti-racism. Many people see a natural sympathy between the victims of different forms of oppression and their fights to escape from them. The analogy surfaces in our modern political vocabulary, such as when people talk of 'racism, sexism and classism' or when they talk of the 'triple oppression' of black women. Fortunately, perhaps, Marx is on record as being opposed to imperialism and this gives him some street credibility on the anti-racist front. Yet there is really no natural alliance between feminist, anti-racist and class struggles to be found in Marx's own work and in fact if anything it looks as if he would be very critical of this project.

I say this because it is quite clear that Marx could have regarded both feminism and anti-racism as movements of *political emancipation* rather than as an integral part of the revolutionary movement of workers. He drew a clear distinction between such emancipatory movements and the more fundamental fight that was needed for *human* emancipation from the alienation of work under capitalism. There is no reason to believe that Marx would have been any more convinced by the arguments of current anti-racist campaigns than he was by the movement against anti-semitism in the nineteenth centry. Although Jewish himself, he writes (in 'On the Jewish Question') with no mincing of words that 'If you Jews wish to achieve political emancipation without achieving human emancipation, then the incompleteness and contradiction does not only lie in you, it lies in the nature and category of political emancipation.'

FEMINISM and anti-racism are primarily movements based on a notion of equality, whether conceived as equal rights and opportunities or in broader terms of social justice and an ethical commitment to equality. Yet Marx was actually *opposed* to egalitarianism, a fact that we often forget. He saw the very concept of 'equality' not as a notion that is dominant in eras of bourgeois rule, but as one that *is* a bourgeois concept, just as 'honour' is an aristocratic concept. (His project was to develop a form of socialist thought that did not rest on this bourgeois ideal, but that explained historical change in a scientific manner.)

Marx's critique of movements of political emancipation is based on his critique of the concept of equality. Equality is the big illusion of capitalism: a system that is based on an 'equal contract' between labourer and capitalist but whose cards are stacked so heavily as to render this formal freedom a farce. Marx sees the State as resting on precisely the kind of civil inequalities — birth, education and so on — that we might see as comparable to inequalities between women and men or those based on racism. Yet he argues against sectional political emancipation on the grounds that it diverts attention from the more fundamental goal of human liberation.

Of course these are only problems for those feminists or anti-racists who do attach credence to Marx's account of how capitalist society works. Leaving this aside for the moment, it seems to me that only two conclusions can be drawn from the conflict — either feminists argue that a sexist socialist society would not have achieved any 'human liberation' worthy of the name, or we argue that pending the arrival

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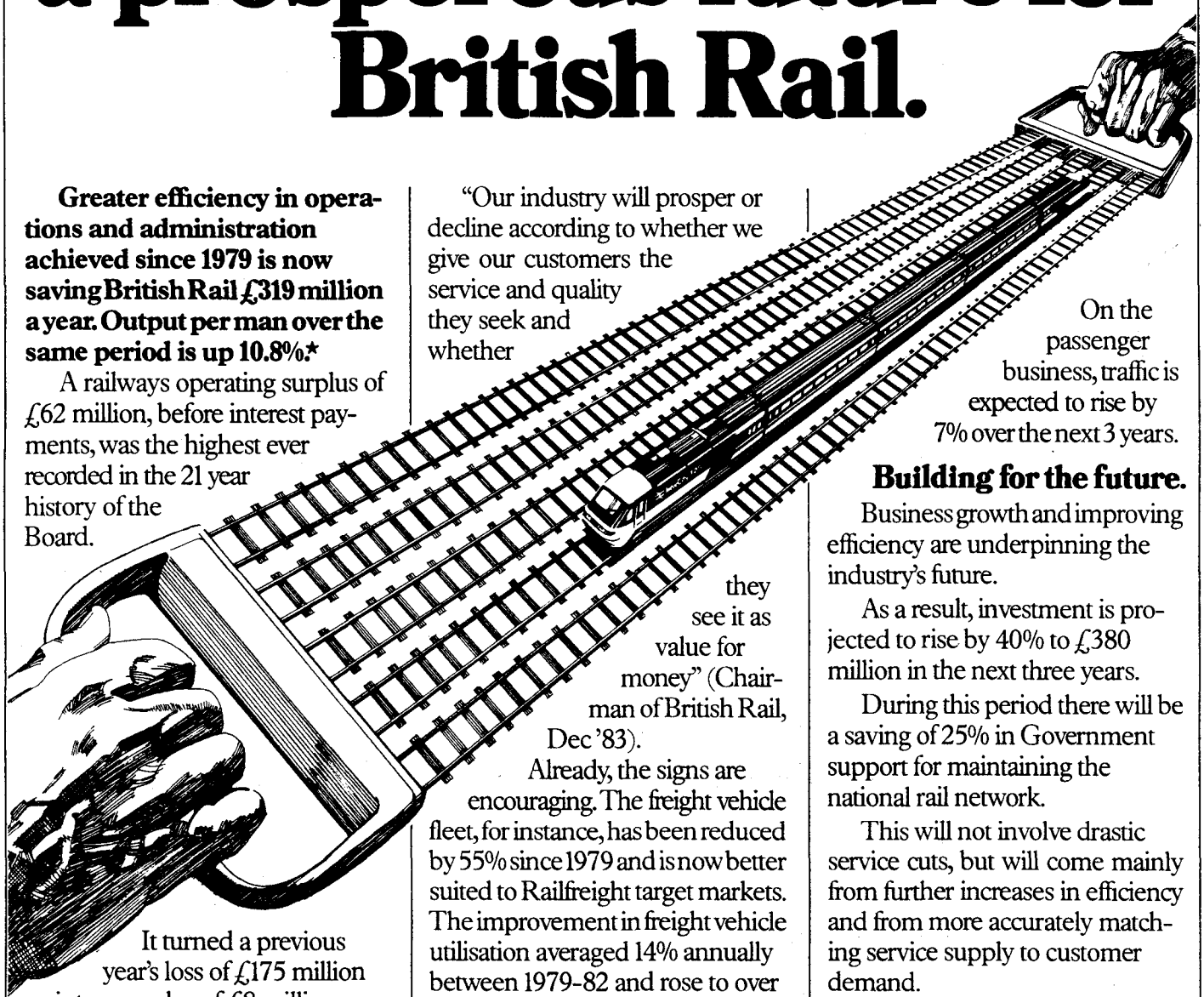
Exercises in efficiency are building a prosperous future for British Rail.



Greater efficiency in operations and administration achieved since 1979 is now saving British Rail £319 million a year. Output per man over the same period is up 10.8%.*

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of socialism there is a more important place than Marx allowed for genuine political emancipation. I think the second of these options has proved more powerful and that this has had far-reaching consequences for Marxism and class struggle as traditionally defined.

FABIANISM, perhaps more than Marxism, is a political perspective that has tended to divide feminists. There is conflict between those feminists who believe it is possible to achieve limited gains through reform and those who take a much more confrontational view of the State and the traditional political arena. Fabian egalitarianism and constitutionalism are influential in many areas of what might loosely be called reformist feminist work. An obvious example might be the Labour-inspired equal opportunities legislation of the 1970s, a superficial set of measures that fail precisely because they ignore the *causes* of the inequalities they seek to solve. Equal Pay legislation that does nothing about how and why women and men are segregated into different kinds of jobs could never actually achieve equal pay — and probably was never intended to.

Colin Wheeler

The more positive legacy of Fabianism in feminist social policy is an emphasis on inequality and how it can be reduced by redistribution. Lobbying groups such as Child Poverty Action Group or the NCCL play an important role in providing a feminist slant to the poverty and civil rights lobbies, but they have moved a long way from the early Fabian concern with issues as fundamental as the redistribution of wealth (rather than income). Yet within this framework of 'inequality' we can see that Fabianism finds it easier to get to grips with different kinds of inequality than does Marxism, and the Fabian Society has taken up the issues of race and sex equality for some time now. Nevertheless it takes them up, as Fabianism does in general, as specific policy questions on which compromise should be sought to reach limited improvements.

Whatever view one takes on the value or otherwise of this policy-orientated work there are some underlying questions that highlight the gulf between feminism and Fabianism in more general terms. I could put this rather baldly by saying that Fabianism flatly denies what to feminists is practically an article of faith: that the personal is political. Not only does Fabianism restrict its concern to public questions of industry and distribution, its politics are rationalist to a fault.

This is well illustrated in the diary record of a conversation between Leonard and Virginia Woolf in 1918 on the question of whether socialists should renounce inherited capital. Leonard Woolf articulated the classic Fabian view ('L. gave us a great many reasons why we should keep what we have, and do good work for nothing. . .'), but Virginia Woolf remarked that 'psychologically it may be necessary' to renounce wealth if capitalism was to be abolished. On this as on other issues, Virginia Woolf took a position far more sympathetic to contemporary feminist ideas than to Fabian rationalism and the implications of this are significant.

What is at stake is an abstract and ethical socialism, restricted firmly to public ownership of industry, versus a socialist politics that has some purchase on people's experience. It is not really difficult to see which would find the most natural sympathy with the women's movement, at least as it has developed here over the last two decades. If there has been an important connection between feminism and Fabianism it has worked the other way round — that the relatively open concern of the Fabians with inequality has made it possible for feminists to put questions about women on the Fabian agenda. I see little evidence of Fabian perspectives becoming influential in feminism itself. This is also true of the relation between feminism and 'municipal socialism' I think, for the reason that in Britain, perhaps more than in the USA or Australia for instance, the women's movement has traditionally been highly suspicious of reformism, and of being co-opted by the Left as well as by the State.

In some ways the question I started with — what has been the influence of Marxism and Fabianism on the women's movement? — has turned itself round. The more significant questions are in fact about the influence that feminism has had on these two political positions. I think the most far-reaching of these is that the old certainties about reform and revolution are under increasing strain. Of course the reformism of a Fabian type of politics is still crystal-clear, as are the limitations of a position based on tinkering with the surface appearance of inequality. But Marxism has yet to face the challenge of feminism and anti-racism. In fact, it has yet to deal with the challenge of two movements that show how 'political emancipation' is more important than Marx thought. □

Michèle Barrett is the author of Women's Oppression Today, *Verso, 1980 and co-author of* The Anti-Social Family *Verso, 1982.*

RACE

Cross section

John Rentoul and Geraldine Hackett on the argument over black representation in the Labour Party

ALTHOUGH MORE black people vote for Labour than for any other party, there are no more black people in the Labour party hierarchy than anywhere else in British public life. These facts have been recognised for some time: the question is what to do about it. All of a sudden, bitter argument has broken out in the Labour Party.

A group of black activists who want to set up 'black sections', with reserved seats on party committees, has come up against an unholy alliance of the Labour leadership and the Militant tendency. The black section steering committee, launched at a meeting in Birmingham last month which attracted 300 people, is lobbying for a 'section' for ethnic minority Labour Party members to be given seats on constituency General Committees, and eventually on the National Executive Committee (NEC), in the same way as women's section and the youth organisation (Labour Party Young Socialists).

The party leadership's reasons for opposing black sections are predictably very different from those of the Militant tendency. Neil Kinnock and shadow Home Secretary Gerald Kaufman have publicly stated their opposition on the grounds that it would be 'apartheid' and cause acrimonious disputes over racial definition.

In the back of their minds, too, must be the party's history of bitter factional struggle over sections and affiliated organisations. Over the years the youth section has been taken over by a series of Left groups; the women's sections have done little to increase the number of women parliamentary candidates and often provide access to constituency General Committees for factions of the Left; and various other affiliated organisations, from the Co-op to the Labour Association of Social Workers, are notorious 'rotten boroughs' of the Left or the Right.

The Militant tendency, on the other hand, vigorously opposes the idea of black sections on political grounds. Their argument against black sections (which is not extended to the Militant-controlled youth section) is often caricatured as being that such issues are a 'distraction from the working-class struggle'. But Militant, mainly through the Young Socialists, has a substantial black membership — probably greater than the Labour Party as a whole — and claims to be more interested in changing what it sees as the Labour Party's racist policies (the programme is still committed to immigration controls, for instance) than in constitutional changes designed, it alleges, to further the 'careerist

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ambitions' of a small unrepresentative group.

The argument began over the composition of a working party set up by the Labour Party's NEC after an inconclusive debate at last year's Brighton conference. Despite five motions calling specifically for black sections, the issue was lumped together with the under-representation of women, working-class people and other disadvantaged groups.

It was eventually agreed that the working party, chaired by Jo Richardson and finally set up this Spring, would consider only the question of race. Meanwhile, black sections have already been set up in 22 constituencies. Three London constituencies (Vauxhall, Westminster North and Holborn and St Pancras) have also given their black sections seats on their General Committees, in defiance of the party constitution. Under the constitution, the NEC has to give its approval for organisations to have voting rights in local parties.

Diane Abbott, a black councillor in Westminster North, says their meetings for black members draw people who do not go to their local meetings. In Vauxhall, the black section was set up a few weeks after the 1983 conference debate, and draws about 20 people to meetings, out of an estimated 100 black members in the constituency.

Black organisation seems to produce results. Over a third of the population of Brent, north London, is black, but until 1971 there were no black councillors. Black members of the three constituency parties in the borough (in Brent North they make up about a fifth of the membership) organised an unofficial black caucus, and now 10 of the 32 Labour councillors are black.

In policy terms, this has meant the council has more readily taken up issues such as the under-achievement of black children in schools. The change has not come about without tensions — one black councillor, Ambrozine Neil, defected to the Tories because the Labour Party wouldn't agree to all-black schools, thus giving control of the council to a Conservative-Liberal coalition.

The aim of the black sections is not, however, to 'deliver' the black vote to the Labour Party, in the style of the traditional black community leaders, but to demonstrate positive commitment on the part of the party. This is bound to create divisions in the black community, according to Mark Wadsworth, one of the founders of the Vauxhall black section. 'The Labour Party has relied on community godfathers to deliver huge community votes, and the godfathers aren't going to give up their position easily,' he says. Black sections could provide an alternative power base for younger (usually male) activists, from which to challenge their older community leaders.

DESPITE ALL the rhetoric — from those opposed to black sections as much as from those in favour — about Labour 'taking the black vote for granted', it is clear that the connection between race and voting behaviour is not one-dimensional. About 70 per cent of black people who vote do vote Labour (an 80 per cent figure is often quoted, but is based on Commission for Racial Equality data drawn from areas with a high concentration of ethnic minority population). However, in British social life, it is not easy to separate race from class, housing tenure and urbanisation — factors which can also create Labour support but which, unlike race, are seen as being changeable by human effort. Research by Zig Layton-Henry at Warwick University shows that immigration policy is the second most important factor, *after* class, influencing Asian voters.

Whatever the reasons, the fact is that black people tend to vote Labour. Dr Michel le Lohé of Bradford University found that in inner-city Bradford twice as many Asians as whites voted in the Euro-election last month, and 89 per cent of them voted Labour. Paul Sharma, the treasurer of the black section steering committee, links this to a demand for representation: 'Blacks are the most loyal of Labour's supporters but the least represented. There are no Afro-Asians on the NEC nor are any employed at an executive level at the Labour party's HQ in Walworth Road.'

Neil Kinnock is, however, quite happy to see black sections formed as long as they don't have automatic seats on General Committees. He sees their role as being to recruit black people into the party and, among the Afro-Caribbean population, to launch a Jesse Jackson-style registration campaign (about 35 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans do not vote, whereas Asians were around the national average abstention rate of 27 per cent at the last election and many of both groups are not even registered).

But demands for representation are going to be very hard for the leadership to resist. Eighteen motions calling for black sections have been submitted to this year's Labour Party conference, in Blackpool in October. The party already has women's sections and youth sections with automatic rights of representation. The youth section elects its own representative to the NEC. However, the five women's seats on the NEC are elected by the annual conference, effectively handing over the choice to male union bureaucracies — a section of the constitution that the Women's Action Committee also hopes to change at Blackpool.

Many of the advantages claimed for black sections, like recruitment and developing confidence and consciousness, do not require the crude positive discrimination of automatic seats on party committees. But something must clearly be done quickly about the lack of black MPs and councillors. The difficulty is how to solve this problem without losing sight of the wider issues of reforming the party's faction-ridden structure and of positive discrimination for all other under-represented groups. □

Additional reporting by Arlen Harris

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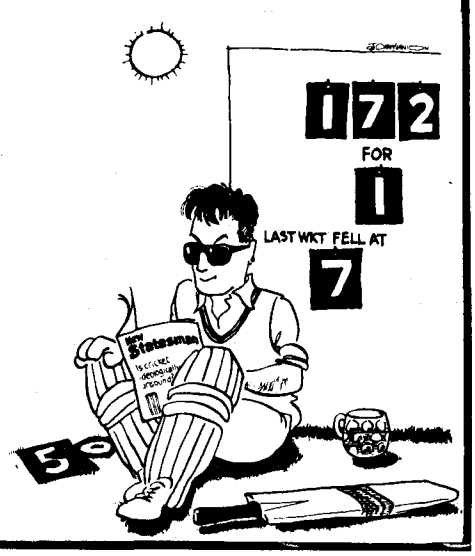

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NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Plutonium goes critical

Rob Edwards pins down what US bombs could be made of

THERE IS now no doubt that the government and nuclear industry in Britain have seriously misled Parliament and the public over the uses of British plutonium in America. For years ministers and officials have been giving assurances that British civil plutonium would not be used in American nuclear weapons, but dramatic new evidence from the US government reveals that about four tonnes of British plutonium produced in electricity board reactors and exported to America in the late 1960s is in fact likely to end up in American nuclear warheads.

In 1964 Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home told the House of Commons that under a 1958 mutual defence agreement Britain was sending some plutonium from its new civil nuclear reactors to America; in exchange it was receiving some highly-enriched (i.e. bomb-grade) uranium. He stressed that there were no plans to use any British civil plutonium for British weapons and added 'I am informed by the United States government that they have no intention of using the plutonium received from us for weapons purposes.' (It is important to realise that Douglas-Home was referring only to *civil* plutonium produced in reactors run by the electricity authorities. The government has admitted that plutonium from British Nuclear Fuels Ltd's *military* reactors at Calder Hall and Chapelcross, which also produce electricity for the national grid, has been sent to America for use in their weapons.)

There the matter rested until it was raised again in 1981 by Dr Ross Hesketh (who was sacked but then reinstated by the Central Electricity Generating Board for his pains) and Labour MP Robin Cook. In July 1982 the then Energy Under-Secretary John Moore repeated Sir Alec Douglas-Home's claim that the electricity board plutonium sent to America was 'for civil purposes' and went on to describe where in the American fast reactor research programme the material was being used. He concluded by stating that 'the assurance given to the United Kingdom in 1964 has been fulfilled.'

These assurances have now been shown to be worthless. In a remarkably frank letter to John Dingell, chairman of the House of Representatives' Energy and Commerce Committee, the US Energy Secretary Donald Hodel has made it clear that the British plutonium could well end up in weapons — and that the British government knew this all along. The US Department of Energy (DOE) has both a defence section (Defense Programs) and a civil energy section. In May this year Hodel wrote that the 1958 mutual defence agreement:

> stipulates that the plutonium obtained from the UK in exchange for US defense materials, is to be used for defense activities. The Department's Defense Programs has loaned this plutonium to DOE energy supply research and development activities with the knowledge of the UK. The terms of the mutual defense agreement, however, remain unchanged . . . The loan of this plutonium during the past two decades has been with the understanding that, if required, it would be returned to its owners — Defense Programs.

In its report to Congress on the issue the Energy and Commerce Committee summarises the dilemma thus:

> It is clear that some UK officials believe that they have received 'assurance' that this plutonium would not be used for weapons. However, in Secretary Hodel's opinion, it is distinctly possible that plutonium used in or obtained from civilian facilities in the United Kingdom will in future be used for nuclear weapons purposes by the United States.

Oddly, Hodel still seeks to maintain that his Department's policy 'has been and continues to be not to use this material for weapons.' This is a line carefully worked out in 'extensive consultations' between the American and British governments in order to deflect penetrating questions from another member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Richard Ottinger, earlier this year. It was quoted last week by UK Energy Secretary Peter Walker in defence of Britain's position. Yet, as the context of Hodel's letter to Dingell makes clear, it is not by any means the whole truth.

The Energy and Commerce Committee's report points out that:

> Secretary Hodel's views as to . . . the Department's right to use the UK plutonium in US nuclear weapons, notwithstanding his disclaimers as to intent to use the material, appears to conflict with statements made in the British Parliament over the last 20 years which indicated that the United States did not intend to use the plutonium in nuclear weapons.

ALL THIS has emerged in the US Congress because of growing pressure from politicians to ensure the complete separation of civil and military nuclear activities in the US. Two years ago the US government was prohibited from using plutonium obtained from commercial spent fuel for weapons. This was the result of a Congress amendment co-sponsored by Democratic Senator Gary Hart. But a loophole remained — the plutonium contained in the Department of Energy's civilian research and development facilities (including the four tonnes from Britain) was not covered.

In order to close this loophole, the House Energy and Commerce Committee under Representative Dingell has introduced another legislative amendment which has been vigorously opposed by the US government. Refusing to accept any compromises, the government made it crystal clear that it does not wish to give up the option of using the British plutonium ('this very valuable and essentially irreplaceable defense material') in warheads. The amendment is now dead for the current section of Congress and its future depends on whether or not it is reintroduced in the next session.

The Committee was alarmed at the US Administration's attitude and concerned that any blurring of the distinction between nuclear power and nuclear weapons 'could be devastating to the nuclear non-proliferation efforts of the United States'. All the international rules aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons are based upon maintaining a clear separation between civil and military technologies — a difficult distinction in the best of times. Both the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards involve the promotion of civil technology, while at the same time they try to prevent basically the same technology from being used to make nuclear bombs.

The US representative on the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ambassador Gerard Smith has accused the US Department of Energy of destroying the barrier between civil and military nuclear activities. He said: 'This barrier is an essential feature of US efforts over the past 25 years to control the global spread of nuclear weapons.'

The ultimate irony of Britain's disreputable involvement in fuelling the American nuclear arms race is that one day its plutonium might be returned. Only instead of being just a spin-off from generating nuclear electricity, it will be at the heart of a cruise or Trident or some other missiles, ready to trigger a nuclear world war.

Rob Edwards is co-ordinator of the CND Sizewell Working Group which is planning to give evidence to the Sizewell Inquiry on this issue in the autumn.

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

☐He was backed by Dr Justin Robbins who describes boxing as a barbaric, ignoble art and urged members to give the supporters of boxing a 'swift upper cut knocking them to the canvas, unconscious, bloody and out for the count.' — *Guardian* (C. Ligota)

☐Deciding to throw two used polling cards in a public litter bag and not on the ground has earned a Burnley man a ticking-off from the council. Mr Alan Beard of Woodbine Road was amazed to receive a letter from the town hall this week advising him to put his litter in his own dustbin. — *Burnley Express* (George Moor)

☐Council tenants in Doncaster have been banned from building fall-out shelters because the Labour controlled council has declared the borough a nuclear free zone. — *Daily Telegraph* (Mrs A. Cohen)

☐A police officer kicked a man so hard in the face that the sole of his boot came off, it was claimed at Leeds County court. The man, Mr John Marshall, aged 57, was accused of criminal damage to a police boot. — *Guardian* (Lilian Solity among others)

☐Southern catering at Waterloo Station sold 984,600 burgers during the year, while at the same station there were 50 sets of false teeth handed in. — *Croydon Advertiser* (R. H. Millward)

☐'The annual school lecture was always given by someone like Bruce Kent or Ken Livingstone', he said, 'and teachers would make little comments in class. Even the physics teacher would mention that nuclear weapons are dangerous, which is a left-wing view.' — *Daily Telegraph* (John Graham)

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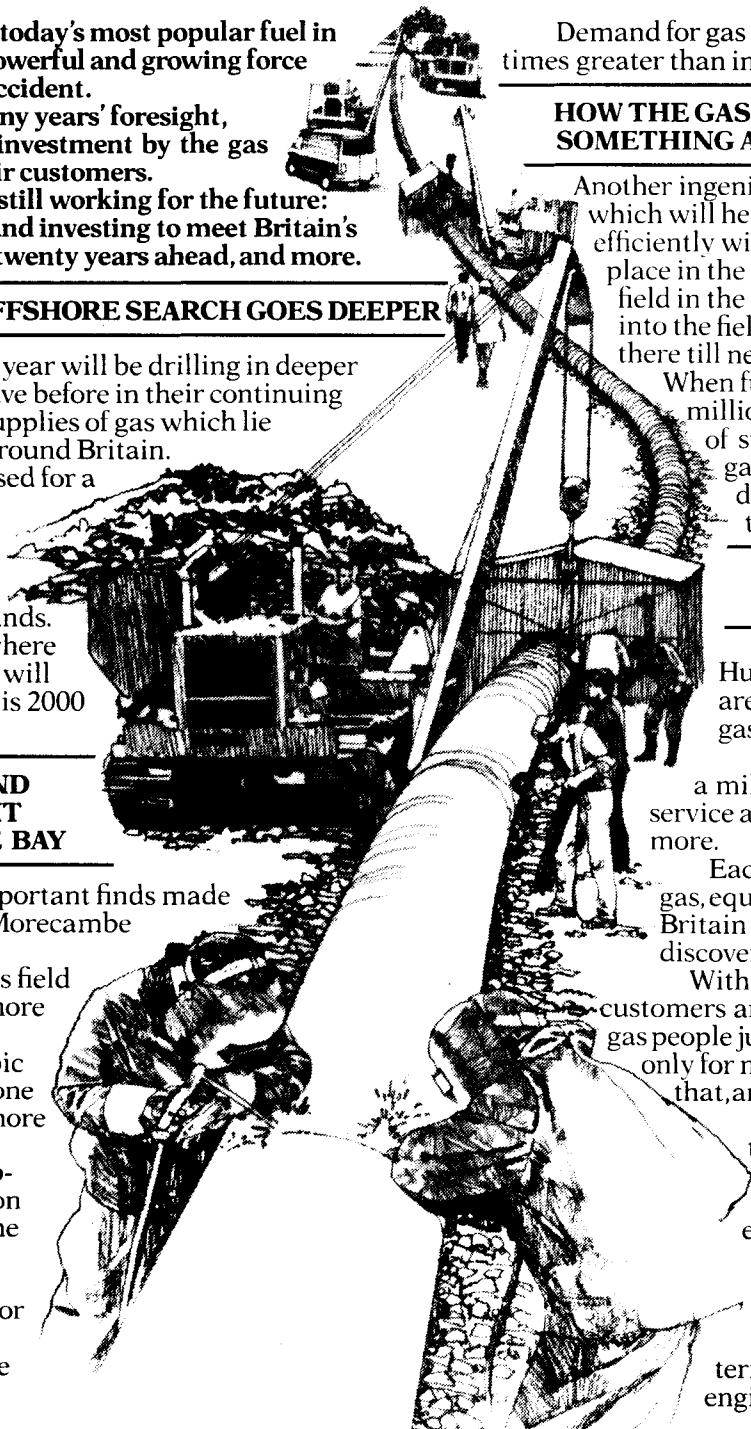

NEW £100 MILLION OFFSHORE SEARCH GOES DEEPER

The gas people this year will be drilling in deeper water than they ever have before in their continuing search for the further supplies of gas which lie buried under the seas around Britain.

Eight rigs will be used for a mixture of exploration, appraisal and development wells in areas as far apart as the English Channel and the Shetlands. It is off the Shetlands where the deep-water drilling will take place–the sea bed is 2000 feet down!

BILLION POUND DEVELOPMENT IN MORECAMBE BAY

One of the most important finds made by the gas people is in Morecambe Bay, off Lancashire.

The Morecambe gas field lies about 26 miles offshore Blackpool and, with an estimated 5 trillion cubic feet of gas in reserve, is one of Britain's largest offshore gas fields.

Its ongoing development represents a billion pound investment by the gas people in Britain's future–and provides thousands of jobs now for British workers.

One great advantage of the Morecambe field is that it belongs to British Gas. This means that output can more easily be controlled to help ensure in cold winter weather that customers' needs for gas are met.

Demand for gas at such times can be up to six times greater than in summer.

HOW THE GAS PEOPLE ARE PUTTING SOMETHING AWAY FOR A RAINY DAY

Another ingenious and massive development which will help the gas people to cope efficiently with winter demand is taking place in the partially depleted Rough gas field in the North Sea. Gas will be pumped into the field in the summer, and stored there till needed.

When fully operational, this £600 million development will be capable of supplying a billion cubic feet of gas a day at periods of peak demand–more than seven times the original output of the field.

GIANT CELLARS 'SALT' AWAY GAS

Deep under the North Humberside moors, the gas people are now using salt cavities to store gas against heavy winter demand.

Three of these giant salt cellars, a mile underground, are already in service and work is going ahead on four more.

Each holds a billion cubic feet of gas, equivalent to all the gas used in Britain each day before the North Sea discoveries.

With 8 million central heating customers and 14 million with gas fires, the gas people just have to be fully prepared not only for next winter, but for the one after that, and the one after that, and so on.

These projects are just part of the gas people's massive integrated investment plans to provide for Britain's future energy needs.

But they also bring benefits today–in the form of contracts for British firms for drilling platforms, pipelines, onshore terminals and all the associated engineering plant and equipment.

This, of course, means the creation of many thousands of jobs for British workers–a productive boost for local communities and the national economy.

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DIARY

His Honour Judge Owen Stable and Sir Ronald Leach first publicly blew the whistle on Robert Maxwell. Stable has been a Circuit Judge since 1979 and Leach until he retired to Jersey was the dean of British accountants — ex-senior partner of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell, ex-president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. In 1969 they began investigating Robert Maxwell's Pergamon Press Ltd, then a public company, under Section 165(b) of the Companies Act. This section empowers the Department of Industry, then the Board of Trade, to appoint inspectors where 'circumstances suggest' that a company is being run fraudulently. They found Maxwell to be notably unco-operative as they tried to unravel his affairs. When they produced their report in 1971 they had this to say about him:

> He is a man of great energy, drive and imagination, but unfortunately an apparent fixation with his own abilities causes him to ignore the views of others if these are not compatible. . . Neither his fellow directors, his professional advisers, nor his employees were able to sway his views and actions. The concept of a Board being responsible for policy was alien to him. . . We are also convinced that Mr Maxwell regarded his stewardship duties as fulfilled by showing the maximum profits which any transaction could be devised to show. Furthermore, in reporting to shareholders and investors he had a reckless and unjustified optimism which enabled him on some occasions to disregard unpalatable facts and on others to state what he must have known was untrue. . . We regret having to conclude that, notwithstanding Mr Maxwell's acknowledged abilities and energy, he is not in our opinion a person who can be relied on to exercise proper stewardship of a publicly quoted company.

○

Maxwell's counter-attack was to establish that the inspectors had denied him natural justice, behaving like Star Chamber in not putting their charges to him so that he could answer them. It was a case, he suggested, of the effete old British establishment ganging up on a pushy immigrant who refused to abide by the rules of the club. Since then he has done many things, including reviving Pergamon as a highly profitable, but *private* company and rescuing the old British Printing Corporation which had been run into the ground by its incompetent management. But most people who have been employed by him would agree that as to his character Messrs Stable and Leach got it pretty well right first time. So would many of the people who knew Maxwell the politician, rather than Maxwell the tycoon.

○

Maxwell was adopted as Labour candidate for Buckingham in 1959; was elected in 1964; lost his seat in 1970; was then severely censured by the National Executive Committee for allowing non-members to attend party business meetings, for keeping key election documents in his own house and for taking over some of the duties that should properly have been performed by his agent; suffered a vote of no confidence in him from the local party in the old railway town of Wolverton, declaring that his readoption as Labour candidate 'would result in a humiliating defeat at the next general election with a corresponding and lasting erosion of Labour morale and support'; despite this, got himself readopted as the candidate; and unsuccessfully fought both the 1974 elections, before finally calling politics a day. He left behind him a deeply divided constitutency party.

○

Frank Atter is today mayor of Milton Keynes and was an anti-Maxwell party activist. 'It was not enough to support and work for him. You had to worship him', he says. Ray Bellchambers was the Buckingham agent in the 1945 and 1950 elections and later chairman of the local party and one of those who tried to keep Maxwell under some kind of control. He got a letter out of the blue telling him that he had been expelled. The NEC in due course instructed that he should be reinstated. When he went to his first meeting after this, Maxwell stood up and said 'I adjourn this meeting *sine die*'. Geoffrey Edge is today chairman of the West Midlands Enterprise Board, a member of the West Midlands County Council and was an MP from 1974 to 1979. In the Maxwell years he worked at the Open University and lived at Bletchley. He was asked by the agent to revive a ward party covering Fenny Stratford, where Maxwell owned a house. When he arrived at his first GMC meeting as the new ward secretary 'a woman with a French accent began to scream at me'. This was Mrs Betty Maxwell and his

'offence' was that he had been recruiting party support without reference to the Boss. Edge was duly expelled at a meeting held in Maxwell's house and chaired by Mrs M. on a charge of appropriating £1.20 of party funds. 'Many people in the area still get cold shivers down their spine when they think of Maxwell', says Edge. 'I came to the conclusion that he was basically a dictator who would not tolerate any disagreement.' And this is the man who now seems likely to get his hands on the only national newspaper group that, at least at election time, gives Labour some regular support.

○

Clive Thornton, who was brought in as chairman of Mirror Group Newspapers to prepare it to be hived off from Reed-IPC, has been trying to sell some important ideas to the Reed board and to the financial institutions that he needs as his new shareholders. They have included two-tier boards with employees' interests being represented and trade unions taking a share of the equity. Anyone who knows anything about Fleet Street knows that without some such imaginative new start there will never be any stable reform in the jungle. He has not made himself popular with Reed in the process, or with Lazards, the merchant bank handling the proposed flotation. These 'dangerously radical' ideas are supposed to put off potential investors and the mighty Prudential Assurance has been hard to persuade. The key figure is Reed's chief executive, Leslie Carpenter, rather than its high profile chairman, Sir Alex Jarratt. The prospects of him wanting to persuade his board that it should do the decent thing and settle for an estimated £80 million in setting up a properly independent Mirror Group with a range of shareholders, rather than taking a sure £100 million plus from the bouncing Czech, do not look good. They would have to be shamed into it.

Hugh Stephenson and Bob Woffinden

ROGER WODDIS

A Free House

The government's Trade Union Bill, now going before the Lords on the Report Stage, urges unions to hold postal ballots for places on their executives.

Be glad our masters seek to save the unions,
But there's a larger duty that remains;
Now let us boldly bear the torch of freedom
To where the legislators are in chains.

Supposing we could liberate the Commons,
Ah, just suppose we set the members free
To register their votes by secret ballot,
How democratic would the Chamber be!

Consider how the honest few are heckled
And in debate how terrorised they are,
How they are jeered and jostled in the lobbies
And leaned upon by bullies in the bar.

At all-night sittings, when the screw is tightened,
Even the strongest nerve begins to break;
Under the ceaseless rapping of the Speaker,
The best of them can hardly keep awake.

The leaders put at risk our institutions
With every word that issues from their lips;
The State should stop their violent behaviour
And massed intimidation by the Whips.

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NIGERIA

Passage of illegal cargoes

For the Lagos government, the responsibility for Dikko's kidnap pales beside Britain's involvement in corruption in their oil industry reports Suzanne Cronje

'IF THE NIGERIAN government was not involved in the Dikko kidnapping, it should have been', said a member of the large Nigerian community in Britain. This view about the bid to return the former Transport Minister to Lagos is so widespread among Nigerians that none of Umaru Dikko's former supporters cares to contradict it in public.

His influence over Nigeria during the period of the civilian Shagari government was pervasive. He was not only Minister of Transport and distributor-in-chief of imported foodstuffs — 'Shagari rice', — but also Shagari's brother-in-law; one of his own brothers was made Shagari's oil adviser and another ran the oil refinery in Kaduna. He is a Moslem from the north, who started off in public life without great wealth and is now immensely rich.

Nigeria's Foreign Minister, Ibrahim Gambari, maintains that the money siphoned off by the tycoons who fled Nigeria after the December coup amounts to 'billions'. Ex-President Shagari's fairly untarnished reputation while in power was largely due to the fact that the actual running of the country was left to a small group headed by Dikko.

Dikko's meteoric rise to power made him ruthless and arrogant. Before last year's military coup against Shagari he declared that Shagari's ruling party would run the country 'as long as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west'. Soon after reaching the safety of London, Dikko declared a holy war against the new Buhari government, threatening to bring it down by force of arms if necessary.

His former colleague, who was party chairman, Chief Adisa Akinloye, dissociated himself in his London exile 'from politicians such as Umaru Dikko' and from Isiyaku Ibrahim, another rich Nigerian fugitive from the military government who boasts of having made his money as an arms dealer among other things: 'I was at the age of 30 a millionaire. It would be astonishing if a decade later my business had not advanced me further in life'.

When Ibrahim heard that he had been put on Nigeria's wanted list, he countered by accusing General Buhari of corruption during a previous military regime. The publicity this received in Nigeria may account for the recent press clamp-down as well as the secrecy surrounding the corruption tribunals, in case the allegation is repeated.

So far the main figures in the Shagari administration have not been tried because of lack of firm evidence — which Dikko could help to provide. The Lagos government has repeatedly said that it wants to get him and the other exiles back, but its denial of involvement in the kidnap attempt has been too easily written off.

It is most unlikely that northerners like Buhari, who dominate the military administration, would engage Israeli mercenaries, such as the men who are reported to have carried out the attempt on Dikko. Northern Nigeria is Moslem and pro-Arab and supports the PLO. Other Nigerians, however, particularly the supporters of Chief Awolowo in the Yoruba west, have no prejudice against Israel. But even if it is accepted that the Nigerian government had no direct part in the affair, tensions between Lagos and London are bound to increase.

Nigerian leaders have made it clear to Britain that they want to recover the money transferred overseas by corrupt politicians, as well as the return of the fugitives who constitute a security risk as long as they are in exile. In March, Lagos accused Dikko and others of plotting against Nigeria and the help of mercenaries and plans to destabilise the country were again said to have been discovered last month.

The anger with foreign governments which have remained unmoved by calls for the return of the fugitives has been mounting; the American Embassy in Lagos is now refusing to answer questions about prominent Nigerians in the US and instead issues pre-prepared texts. The British High Commissionier, Hamilton Whyte, admits that London has been approached by Nigeria for help in tracing the missing assets.

Whyte told the *Sunday Concord* in Lagos that he was concerned about allegations on the involvement of the exiles in mercenary plots, but 'we in Britain know nothing about mercenaries, we know nothing about any such plot against Nigeria. We absolutely will have nothing to do with such plots'. If anybody had any relevant information, 'please let us know so that we can, if possible, do something about it'.

The British government had not been asked where these people were, Whyte said. He added that no extradition request had been received although the Nigerian government has now made an extradition request for Dikko.

The British reaction to the kidnap attempt has acted like a trigger to latent Nigerian grievances. Harsh words have been said about Britain's economic and foreigh policies. In particular, the government-owned media has accused the Thatcher government of pricing North Sea Oil so as to 'drive down the price of Nigeria's crude' in an attempt to ruin the Nigerian economy. Underlying these feelings is the realisation that the main drain on Nigeria has been corruption in the oil industry in which British and other foreign interests are deeply involved.

Oil companies have colluded with dishonest Nigerians to defraud Nigeria of enormous amounts: A recent Lagos estimate puts the value of the oil thefts at the equivalent of over £14 million *a day*. The position of offshore terminals allows comparatively easy loading of unrecorded oil.

Last September the MV *Trans*, a Greek ship, sailed out of its Nigerian berth ostensibly in ballast, but was later found to be carrying 2,300 tonnes of crude oil, worth some $1.3 million. Nigerian investigations of such incidents which appear to be frequent are not helped by oil companies, one of whose officials recently said that his organisation did provide customs officers with inspection facilities, but, 'when the bottom line is drawn, we are not under an obligation to do so'.

Associated Press

Hamilton Whyte: our man in Africa

Unlike its predecessor, Buhari's military government would like the active co-operation of foreign companies to check such fraud. Dikko and others are wanted to supply evidence about bribe-givers as well as bribe-takers. When Nigeria's oil policy was in doubt after the December coup, the value of sterling, a petro-currency, was adversely affected.

Any isolation of Nigeria might persuade the Lagos government to exceed its OPEC production quotas and make Nigerian crude more competitive than Britain's North Sea oil, which is of similar quality. This will be a serious consideration in London when action over the Dikko incident finally comes to be decided.

Besides, Nigeria owes Britain a great deal of money, and British business interests are anxious to prevent any rupture of relations. Despite the Nigerian austerity measures which have cut British exports to Africa's most valuable market, the balance of trade with Nigeria still shows a surplus of £400 million in the UK's favour. Tension might mean that some of this custom could go to rivals — particularly in France, where Nigeria overtook Saudi Arabia in January for the first time as an oil supplier, although this position may not be maintained. ▷

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The Jaguar jet fighters, which the Shagari administration ordered last year, are a joint Franco-British product. Some observers believe that the Buhari coup was triggered off by the army's discovery that the £300 million order had a £22 million component of kick-back money for Shagari's election funds. After the coup, Lagos was even more surprised to discover that the money for this purchase had originally been set aside by the Export Credits Guarantee Department in London, to allow credit for British firms to participate in the construction of Abuja, the new capital.

The belief that Britain favoured the Shagari leadership so much that it was prepared to overlook the most blatant malpractices now pervades most Nigerian statements on foreign affairs. This did not deter London from dispatching a junior Defence Minister, John Lee, to Nigeria in May to sell more arms. Lee expressed support for Buhari's 'popular' takeover and proposed a partnership between British arms firms and Nigeria, to supply long-term defence needs locally.

When questioned about South African Prime Minister Botha's visit to London, Lee represented this as a 'limited dialogue' only. But as part of the Lagos reaction to the Dikko affair, Nigerian officials are stepping up criticism in Britain's collaboration with the apartheid regime. The government-controlled *Daily Times* had already commented on the recent arrival of a South African oil tanker in Nigerian waters, linking this incident with the fact that 'extremely wealthy but wanted politicians hibernate in western countries'.

The last time that Nigeria took official note that its oil was being used to break the South African oil embargo, it took action by nationalising the offending company, BP Nigeria. This action in 1979 was taken by the military government with whose policies Buhari has repeatedly identified himself. He could react in the same way again. □

ESPIONAGE

Suitcase of disguises

Duncan Campbell and Simon North on the dilemma facing two 'spies' who say they're 'freedom fighters'

TWO ALLEGED CUBAN spies, arrested at Gatwick airport in 1981, were last week refused an application for a retrial. This was despite new evidence that the men were Mexican, not Cuban; and that they were official (although undercover) emissaries of the El Salvador liberation movement, FMLN. As things stand, the two men — Antonio Fernando Sanchez and Luis Garcia Fernandez — will have to finish serving their seven-year sentences. They are at present at Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight.

Sanchez and Fernandez have been faced with an unenviable choice of disclosing the details of the complex FMLN underground support network in Europe, in order to prove their claim to be working for it — or staying in jail. Cuba may, in any case, be involved through its secret backing of the FMLN.

The government case was that Sanchez and Fernandez were working for or facilitating Cuban espionage in Britain. They could have set up spying facilities, separate from the closely-watched Cuban Embassy in London. But the government case hangs entirely on a single fact — namely that the men were equipped to receive coded radio signals that could have been transmitted from Cuba.

Sanchez and Fernandez arrived at Gatwick from Barcelona on 8 December 1981. They were arrested by customs officials who found false bottoms to their suitcases, containing an array of 'secret agent' paraphernalia. This included false passports; forged immigration (including British) stamps; notes of *rendez-vous* sites in several European capitals, including London; $16,000 in cash; invisible writing kits; and wigs and other disguises. The most important evidence against them, however, was their possession of a short-wave radio receiver, together with a reception schedule, instructions and a code book. They subsequently admitted customs offences, but have persistently denied involvement in espionage.

They also deny knowledge of the contents of their cases, which they say there were going to pass on, and claim that they had not originally intended to come to Britain anyway — but had feared that they were under surveillance in Madrid. But they have difficulty in giving a convincing explanation for a note they carried of London *rendez-vous* points, such as tennis courts in Regents Park — or British passport stamps with new, false passports for themselves.

Two days after Sanchez and Fernandez were arrested, operators at a GCHQ monitoring station intercepted one of a series of coded messages on the frequency specified in their instructions. In January and February 1982, a monitoring team, apparently based on a British spyship and on aircraft in the Caribbean, tracked down the location of the transmitter. It was, they claimed, sited in Western Cuba, close to Havana. The two men were then charged with committing acts preparatory to spying.

In their appeal for a retrial, the two men claimed that they were FMLN couriers in Europe. FMLN, they claim, has a professional network of operatives and a cell structure all over Europe. They were handed their cases by an unidentified contact in Madrid. They say that intense secrecy, including the use of false identities, is necessary to evade the possibly murderous attention of CIA and El Salvador government agents.

Two witnesses from Mexico City told the court last week that Sanchez and Fernandez were Mexicans — and known members of the FMLN. One had been approached by them for advice on buying equipment for Radio Farabundi Marti — the FMLN's radio station inside El Salvador. A prominent Mexican civil rights lawyer, Manual Gaggero, was contacted by the El Salvador Human Rights Campaign in December 1981, after the committee feared that the two had 'disappeared' somewhere in Europe. Gaggero travelled to Spain, France and Switzerland and placed advertisements asking after them in Madrid newspapers. He did not know that they had come to Britain.

But neither of the new witnesses has been able to deal with the crux of the case. Were Sanchez and Fernandez only working for the FMLN, or could their FMLN courier activities also have been used by the Cubans? They have faced the perhaps impossible task of *disproving* Cuban involvement.

Their defence has criticised the accuracy of GCHQ's radio bearings, some of which were evidently at least 4 degrees in error. The transmitter could therefore have been located in the Florida Keys in the United States, or in the eastern part of Mexico. But the FMLN have not offered to say where the transmitter actually was, if it was not in Cuba.

FMLN fighter, drawn by Luis Fernandez whilst in Albany prison

Another double-edged question concerns the secret code used on the messages sent from the alleged Cuban transmitter. Although the authorities possess the code book, they claim (implausibly) that they have not decoded the messages. These should have given an indication of the men's real mission. If Cuban espionage activities were not involved, the FMLN itself shouldbe able to produce a second copy of the codebook and authenticate the men's story.

Sanchez and Fernandez maintain that they cannot betray their organisation and risk their comrades' lives. This was why they waited nearly two years before acknowledging their connection with the FMLN. They lied, they say, about their activities in their original trial. They claim now, when the FMLN has had two and a half years to alter its organisation to protect itself from the damage they could have caused if they had been forced to talk, any information about the FMLN's network given to British security in order to exculpate themselves would instantly be passed on to the CIA with the gravest consequences. □

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CHINA

Revolution's End

Once the utopia of the Left, the peasant communes now cause despair to their greatest admirer reports Jonathan Mirsky

Anna Merton/PCL Chinese Resource Centre

Peasants' work, idealised in a contemporary Chinese woodcut

FOR WILLIAM HINTON, Sun Guiying — an egg entrepreneur of Dongerqi Production Brigade near Peking — is a fatal symbol that China's revolutionary tide is ebbing fast. Sun is a heroine of the Chinese press for being the country's first peasant to buy a car. She used some of the £15,000 she earned last year from selling 1,600,000 eggs produced by her 12,000 hens. She had already laid out £7,000 for a truck. 'She needs 12 to 15 people to operate like that,' says Hinton, who has been farming all his life. 'There are five people in her family. I figure she must have hired ten people. My God, that woman is a rich peasant. If you're a socialist this is appalling.'

Since he participated in land reform in the communist-dominated countryside almost 40 years ago — even before Mao's final victory in 1949 — Hinton has been a faithful supporter of the People's Republic. Now 65, he is built like John Wayne with white hair. Harvard-educated, from an establishment East Coast family, Hinton was known to Mao and a friend of Zhou Enlai. He became an idol for millions of young radicals during the 1960s. *Fan Shen* (1966) his personal account of peasant life and politics in Low Bow village, was a basic book for campus revolutionaires from Berkeley to Paris, especially because Hinton had spent years wresting his notes for it back from the Senate's notorious Committee on Internal Security — which had deemed them, and Hinton, threats to the national security.

What they loved about *Fan Shen*, with its leathery sons and daughters of the soil, was its universal message. 'The relevance of Long Bow's history to the present day can hardly be over-emphasised. In countries that stand on the verge of land reform, people are eager to study such revolutions.'

In 1971, Hinton returned to China during the Cultural Revolution, which he was eager to praise for his American audience. In *Turning Point in China* (1972) he wrote: 'Mao Zedong and Mao's revolution are winning out in China. In China the working class is beating back the bourgeoisie. In the world revolution of today, China leads the way'.

It was stirring stuff, but eventually Hinton discovered that in China as a whole, and in Long Bow in particular, the Cultural Revolution had been a disaster — with Mao leading the way in sordid power struggles which at the village level pitted clan against clan and thug against thug in the name of political purity.

What was worst about the Cultural Revolution, from Hinton's standpoint, was that it provided the excuse for the disciples of Deng Xiaoping to retreat from the communal path. In his newest book, *Shen Fan* (1983) Hinton's despair is plain. 'The dream, born in 1949, of liberated tillers marching together towards socialist prosperity has given way to an old principle from which hundreds of millions suffered grievously in the past, the principle that "a few must get rich first".'

Hinton believes that what has brought forth ill omens like Sun Guiying, the demon egg-producer and her new Toyota, is the Responsibility System. This is the Dengist policy which encourages individual entrepreneurs to over-fulfil their State quotas and use the surplus for their own purposes. Newly-rich egg producers, snake raisers, providers of services, and farmers are now held up for national admiration. Last month, the Party's *Peoples Daily* commanded rural cadres to stop forcing successful farmers to contribute to community projects. The only 'spiritual obligation' of the well-off, the paper observed, is to demonstrate to their neighbours that 'getting rich is better than charitable acts'.

'It's very disappointing,' says Hinton, who has been lecturing in Oxford and London. 'All through history, everyone has taken the exploitive get-rich road. In China they were pioneering something new. There was something valuable there. Now it's been abandoned. It makes me sad. In countries like Nicaragua, they're trying the Chinese experiment and now China abandons it.' Why?

The Dengists, Hinton holds, have been suspicious of co-operatives since the '50s. 'Liu Shaoqi [Mao's second-in-command] always wanted Mao to mechanize first, to take 20 years before going over to co-operatives. Deng Xiaoping is the same. After the Great Leap failed in the '50s, they shoved Mao out of the way and took China down the individual road. Now it's happening again.'

Hinton goes even further. The reason Liu and Deng cooperated with Mao in the heady Great Leap days was to push the co-operative policies to extremes in order to discredit them.

The cost of the individual road will be heavy. Hinton describes a China being rapidly carved up into private property. 'Now they're fighting again over water rights and access to tiny individual strips of land.'

In perhaps one third of China's communes, Hinton concedes, bullying cadres and stagnation sometimes had reduced productivity to pre-1949 levels. In such places peasants were keen to escape into individual effort, and have indeed done better. 'It's hard to argue with productivity'. But in Long Bow, and thousands of other communes where cooperatives had been a success, 'they were ordered, against their will, to change to the Responsibility System. Believe me, plenty of people down there are pretty bitter.'

How did the party obtain compliance? Hinton would have been slow to admit this a few years ago: 'Party discipline is a wonderful thing. In Long Bow, the Party Secretary is 100 per cent opposed, but at New Year he put up a sign, "Hail the new system." The peasants will obey for a while. They think the law is whatever

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the Party Secretary says it is. Orders from the centre are like acts of God. Anyway, if you argue, the Party accuses you of counter-revolution.'

But China's peasants will not remain docile. 'There's a big constituency for co-ops in China. People are unhappy. Plenty of them think wages and employers who put profit first are despicable. Will there be another Cultural Revolution? 'Sooner or later they'll turn against polarization.'

In the meantime, the new system is bringing back the worst aspects of the old society. 'It's based on cash. Every man's hand is turned against his neighbour. Corruption? If you don't have the right papers, pay off the policeman. Same goes at the scales for getting better weights. They even have to pay people now to help out in flood emergencies.'

Expensive weddings and funerals are again common in rural areas and Catholicism, which Hinton has supposed to be extinct, has re-emerged in Long Bow, stronger than ever.

HINTON HAS HAD a vision of collective labour all his life (except on his own farm in Pennsylvania, where he says his farmer neighbours are devout individualists) and he writes lyrically of scenes on the Long Bow communal threshing floor. 'It was impossible not to feel a sense of rightness, a sense of deep fellowship. . . how better could an earth-bound people organize a community like this, how better face the future?'

Long Bow's peasants, despite Hinton's insistence that they are furious at being driven into private enterprise, might be less lyrical. As a result of Mao's abrupt creation of the communes in the mid-1950s, peasants around Long Bow were dying. 'That Communist wing really got us into trouble,' one villager told Hinton. 'If we'd continued down that road we'd have starved to death'. So the peasants, Hinton recounts unenthusiastically, began reclaiming waste land for their own use, 'which yielded well because intense effort went into it. People got up early, stayed out until late, and skipped their rest at noon to till the plots.'

And now the same thing has happened again. The co-operative movement which Hinton, so passionately admired and worked for, 'plagued by commandism, corruption, apathy, and stagnation, has suddenly broken ranks and slid into headlong retreat. . . People who once looked upon co-operation as the road to salvation now damn it as sharing poverty. . .'

Hinton once dreamed of retiring to Long Bow and carrying night-soil buckets into the co-operatively owned fields to the end of his days. Many of his old comrades, the peasants of Long Bow, would, alas, probably do almost anything to get their hands on a few hundred acres of his prime Pennsylvania corn country, and keep everyone else out. □

NEW ZEALAND

Fighting fit

This week, Labour voters seem set to vote Sir Robert Muldoon out of office. Helen Clark gives some of the reasons

SHORTLY after it lost office, the Labour Party appeared to be devastated. Membership had sunk to its lowest level, funds were running out and the party went on to lose the next two elections to an abrasive, domineering, populist right-winger. Thus the New Zealand Labour Party after it was voted out in 1975.

Now it looks poised to win power in this Saturday's general election. Its recovery is in no small part due to the fundamental re-organisation of the party which was prompted by the 1975 defeat. A drive to recruit members and raise funds was quickly spearheaded in country-wide tours by party leader Bill Rowling. By the next election in 1978 (they are held every three years) the party had recovered to win more votes than the governing Conservatives, though this only reduced the majority of seats (from 22 to 11 in the 99 seat parliament) of Robert Muldoon's National Party.

Although the party had performed better, this second defeat prompted another phase of change shaped, in large part, by the demands of the newly recruited or freshly activated members. They wanted the parliamentary Labour caucus to have less power over the party and in May 1979 it was the party activists' candidate, J.P. Anderton who won the vote for party president, defeating the MP who was the sitting vice-president. Anderton changed the role of president into that of national spokes-person for the party and, from his position, promoted modernisation of the party.

Traditionally, the party had been staffed by a general secretary, assistant general secretary and a handful of regional organisers. (As in Britain, it has individual members and trade union affiliates.) In 1979 the first women's officer and education officer were appointed and it was decided that the new appointments should be made on the basis of what functions the party wanted carried out. Secretaries in the regions were to be evaluated on their abilities as campaign organisers. New officials, organisers and members of the party's executive were active in organising training seminars within the constituencies and for candidates and their organisers at national level. All seminars focussed on basic campaign techniques such as data storage and canvassing.

At the same time, they party began to put all membership records on a central computerised register. The party had set itself a target of recruiting a minimum of 10 per cent of Labour voters (691,000) in 1978) through extensive door-knocking. The target was reached by 1981 when there were 80,000 individual members and an increased vote of 702,600 — 34.5 per cent of the total electorate.

AS FOR MONEY, the 1977 conference had voted to change the system of raising funds for national headquarters. Each constituency party organisation now pays the centre every year a sum of money for each Labour *vote* cast in their constituency at the previous election. In the past, levies based on the number of members had encouraged local parties to suppress membership figures. Now membership had to increase, especially in the more complacent and dormant organisations of safe Labour seats, in order to meet the new levies.

Since 1981, the system of donations has been re-organised in the Victory for Labour Scheme. Proceeds, drummed-up through a new fund-raising division, are split equally between the central office and the donor's constituency. A bank transfer form for one-off gifts, designed by the Labour Party, is pushed at all party dinners and rallies. 'Phone banks', where party workers gather and ring round lists of possible donors, are regularly organised. Such methods have been highly successful in boosting revenue. Head Office also makes a direct annual appeal to members and known donors — on whom adequate individuals records are now kept.

There is no obvious reason why the British Labour Party should not take up any of these methods (the 'phone bank' is adapted from Canadian New Democratic Party fund-raising techniques). What would be more controversial — as it proved in New Zealand — is raising money from commercial companies. Corporate donors now contribute significantly more to the party than do the affiliated unions. Companies are approached every year with the argument that in a democracy they have an interest in government being checked by a strong opposition. It's proved persuasive in an era of fanatical free market and monetarist governments.

Whether the flow of money from commercial interests will continue through a period of Labour government is questionable. It could anyway serve as yet one more constraint on Labour's reforming edge, bearing out the contention that there are, alas, no free lunches.

Such a programme of modernisation was not carried out in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, and nor did organisational needs suffocate political debate. There have been bitter, public divisions within the parliamentary Labour caucus and in 1980 Rowling only survived a move to replace him by one vote. Political divisions also exist within the membership.

What the experience of the New Zealand Labour Party suggests then is that while a sound organisational and financial base cannot on its own bring electoral success, it will guarantee the party's survival in a fit state to fight elections. Without the success achieved in rebuilding the party organisation and in regaining a large membership, a small and inward looking party may well have self-destructed leaving its successors the truly formidable task of trying to recreate a credible party of the Left in New Zealand politics. □

Helen Clark is the Labour MP for Mt Albert, Auckland, and is on the New Zealand Labour Party Executive.

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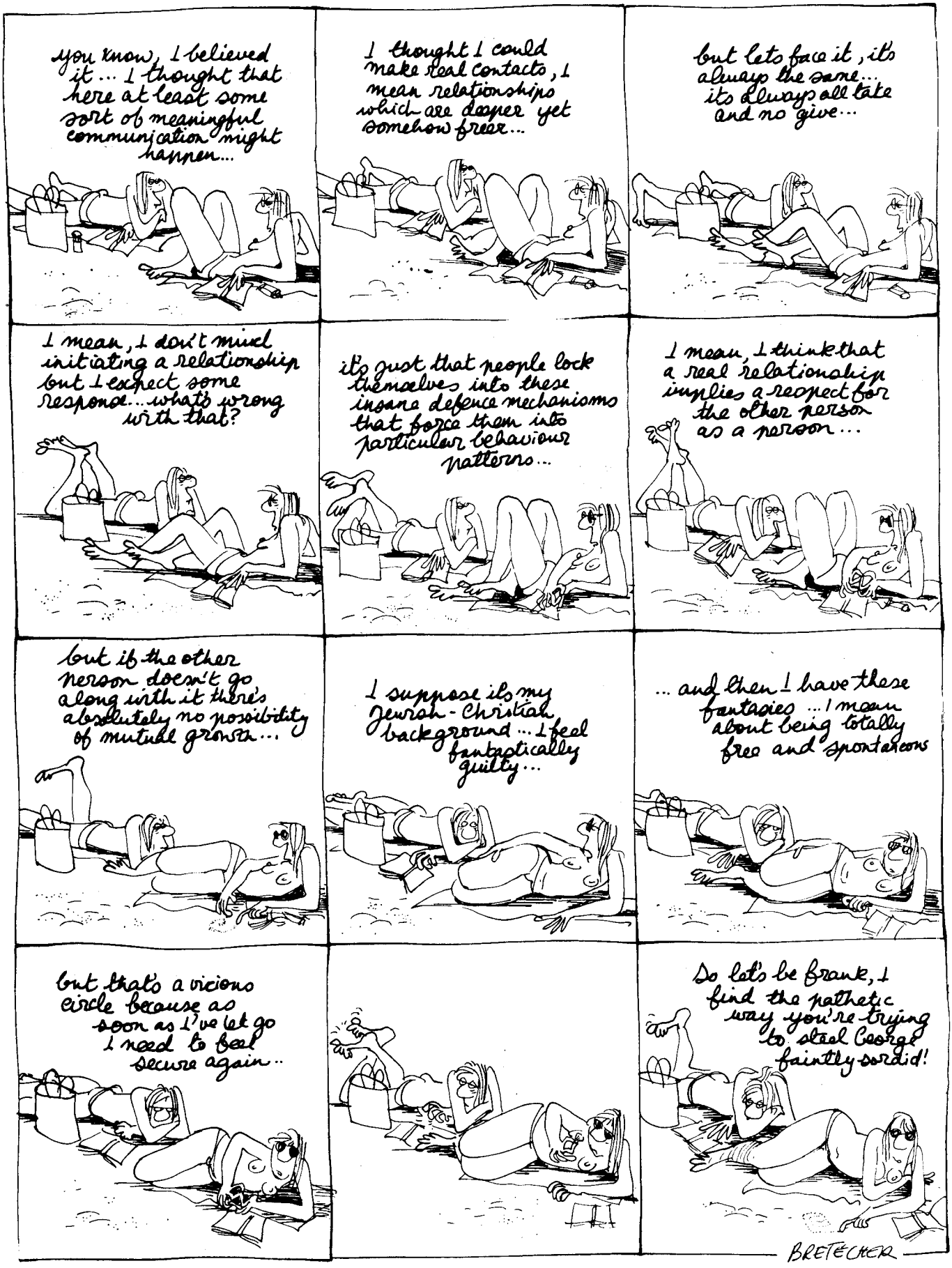
BRETECHER

BARE SOULS


you know, I believed it... I thought that here at least some sort of meaningful communication might happen...
I thought I could make real contacts, I mean relationships which are deeper yet somehow freer...
but lets face it, it's always the same... it's always all take and no give...
I mean, I don't mind initiating a relationship but I expect some response... what's wrong with that?
it's just that people lock themselves into these insane defence mechanisms that force them into particular behaviour patterns...
I mean, I think that a real relationship implies a respect for the other person as a person...
but if the other person doesn't go along with it there's absolutely no possibility of mutual growth...
I suppose it's my Jewish-Christian background... I feel fantastically guilty...
... and then I have these fantasies ... I mean about being totally free and spontaneous
but that's a vicious circle because as soon as I've let go I need to feel secure again...
So let's be frank, I find the pathetic way you're trying to steal George faintly sordid!
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

Sound on home ownership?

David Griffiths, Chair, Labour Housing Group.

The Opposition Treasury Team offer a surprisingly lame defence of their recent move to increase the mortgage tax relief ceiling from £30,000 to £31,000 (*NS* 29 June).

There is now a huge disparity in the degree of public assistance to the two major housing sectors. Tax concessions to home-owners can of course be measured in various ways. But as a crude comparison, mortgage tax relief for 1984/85 is estimated at some £2,750 million, compared with Exchequer subsidies to Council housing (in England) of some £300 million. For egalitarians it must be a priority to correct this gross inequity — not in any spirit of hostility to home ownership, but simply to secure the even-handed support for different forms of housing tenure which is a prerequisite of genuine choice in housing. Labour's principled arguments for fairness and choice are in no way advanced by the Treasury Team's Parliamentary point-scoring — the credibility of which is anyway surely threadbare when only a year ago Labour was, quite rightly, *opposing* the increase in the ceiling from £25,000 to £30,000.

As for the argument that the amendment afforded an opportunity to advance Labour's policy of restricting relief to the standard rate of income tax: why not, then, move an amendment to achieve just that?

Sir Keith: home and dry?

Steven Rose, Biology Dept, Open University

Sir Keith Joseph as a wet (*NS* 6 July)? It certainly doesn't seem so from the universities or polys, where a dirigiste DES is now waging war on whatever aspect of critical thinking and teaching it can lay hands on, from peace studies to critical economics. If this is wetness, then the Open University's social science course is hard-line marxist.

A taste of tactics to come?

Pete Strauss, Reclaim Chilwell Group, *c/o Nottingham CND*

Your report (*NS* 6 July) of the Mass Trespass at Chilwell Depot suffers from having taken at face-value the MoD and *Nottingham Evening Post* version of events at that action. There were *not* 300, but 1200-1500 people who managed to trespass on the latest US base that day. And they were *not* all stopped at the inner-perimeter of barbed wire. . .as many as 150+ penetrated right to what to MoD calls the most 'sensitive' areas of the base.

Your photograph accompanying the story shows quite accurately an army video-crew making a film record of the Trespass. There were indeed several hundred soldiers on duty there that day, and they behaved with consistent and considerable violence against the peaceful demonstrators. The question that needs to be asked is: what the hell were they doing there in the first place?

There are plenty of MoD police available to deal with such demonstrations, and more importantly, the country is chock-a-block with civilian police on picket-duty who could have been used. Could it be perhaps that Chilwell was a Training Day for the troops? Perhaps the government is bracing itself for an onslaught of civil disobedience, not just from the peace movement, but from Liverpool councillors, GLC rate-payers, miners, the unemployed, outlawed trade-unionists, and the dispossessed generally. We shall have to wait and see.

Commissions undone

Peter Newsam, Chairman, Commission for Racial Equality

Ellis and Appleby have provided, on the whole, a fair assessment of the Commission for Racial Equality's difficulties in conducting formal investigations (*NS* 6 July). There are just three points which we would like to make.

First, they make no mention of this year's Prestige judgment, which has probably been the most damaging of all the court decisions so far. In this the Lords decided that the Commission had no power to conduct investigations into named persons unless it had grounds for believing that they might have discriminated. This makes it impossible for the Commission to use its investigative powers in the strategic way originally envisaged, we believe, by Parliament.

Second, they refer to the Commission having been 'bogged down by too many investigations with no coherent pattern to them'. We accept that we took on too many investigations. We do not accept that they had no coherent pattern. Almost all our investigations were started in accordance with our original strategy, which was carefully thought out. This ensured a wide coverage both geographically and in the types of organisation investigated. Even the Select Committee, which was otherwise critical, commented that our 'criteria and sense of priorities in deciding where to investigate seem sensible'.

Finally, it is not the case that we have decided to undertake no new investigations. As Ellis and Appleby rightly point out, we have been concentrating on clearing up the old ones. When that is done, we will start again.

Poetic justice

Alastair Elliot, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

John Lucas (Letters 6 July) cannot admit that he misread the only poem in Anthony Thwaite's book that he mentioned in his spiteful review (*NS* 22 June), and challenges me to explain 'how' he misread it.

Briefly, Lucas cited deliberately low-key throwaway lines from the poem ('Mr Cooper') as straightforward examples of how not to write, and treated the poem as comparable in subject with Larkin's later poem 'Mr Bleaney', which it is not. The great question for Lucas was whether Thwaite did or did not show that he was moved by a complete stranger's death and thus prove himself of superior sensitivity to the other people in the pub in the poem. Wrong, and I think malicious too, with its gratuitous sneer, since the poem is not about Mr Cooper or Mr Thwaite but about the vagueness of the mark we make (any of us, at home or — where we more usually notice it — in other people's cities): named or unnamed we fall into and out of existence like the rain outside that Manchester pub in the poem, while the environment just keeps on standing there, pitilessly surviving.

Lucas defends his statement that Randall Jarrell was a non-combatant in World War II by saying he gets it from Lowell. If true, it's an interesting fact about the poet of 'The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner' (and other poems which seem to show battle experience), but my reference book says Jarrell was a combat pilot and navigator (*American Literature since 1900,* edited by Marcus Cunliffe, 1975).

Lucas also defends the opening remark of his review, 'The Second World War was in a sense America's first', which I contested; he says it does not mean that America was not conscious of World War I. To me it can only mean that 'in a sense' (and presumably despite Cummings, Dos Passos, Faulkner, Hemingway, Eliot and Pound, to say nothing of those who were killed or wounded) the war did not count for America. What else can it mean? Even misquoting it (as Lucas does in his letter) doesn't seem to me to reduce its nonsense quotient.

Storm over sacking

Birmingham Black Sisters

We were shocked to see the letter in the *New Statesman* by Chris Pond (29 June). Not only was it a distortion of the facts but it was also libellous of one of the *New Statesman*'s most reputable journalists. How can the *New Statesman* on the one hand print excellent major articles by Amrit Wilson and at the same time print a letter which brings into question her integrity as a journalist in the very journal she has written for so many years? We and other black women who have read her articles over the years find this treatment of a black woman disgraceful. Would the *New Statesman* have printed such a letter about one of their white journalists?

Staff of West Midlands Low Pay Unit: Steve Winyard; Steve Carr; Liz Morton; Jean Mulholland

In last week's letter concerning the dismissal of Raghib Ahsan from the Low Pay Unit a number of views were left unmentioned: those of the other Unit workers. We very much regret that certain members of the Unit's Consultative Committee should be making such serious allegations without having, at any point, sought the views of the other workers at the West Midlands Low Pay Unit. (It should also be mentioned that they chose to do this while negotiations concerning Ahsan's possible reinstatement were still in progress.)

In our view the central issue of dispute has been the way in which decisions have been reached within the Unit. It is accepted that a small team working under pressure should make decisions jointly and in an atmosphere of trust and co-operation. Ahsan has repeatedly refused to enter into the spirit of collective working and has chosen instead to ignore the opinion of others and to impose on them his own methods of working.

The value of the Unit's work has been widely acknowledged throughout the West Midlands. This work has now been unnecessarily threatened as a result of ill-informed accusations and innuendo generated by the activities of a tiny group of individuals, despite the fact that Ahsan has been offered reinstatement but has turned it down. In all of this we should not be distracted from the real issue: the problem of the low paid.

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No easy images

Neil McIntosh, Director, Shelter

I write in reply to Ken Edwards's letter (*NS* 29 June) only because the problem of our inability to communicate effectively the pain of homelessness and bad housing to the well housed majority is all too plain in the complacency and even support which has greeted the government's massive cuts in housing investment.

Mr Edwards suggest that the recent Penguin book with which Shelter is associated, *Down and Out: Orwell's Paris and London Revisited,* is one of 'the shoddier pieces of Orwell exploitation this year'. I simply cannot see why it should be a shoddy exploitation of Orwell to point out in as graphic a form as possible the fact that 50 years after he wrote the original *Down and Out* the conditions, and even the institutions which he described, still exist.

The book is not distinguishing between deserving and undeserving homeless any more than Orwell was when he wrote the original. It is simply a description of a particular aspect of homelessness and to suggest that there is no political analysis contained in it indicates that Mr Edwards has glanced at the book and has clearly not read it.

What is more disturbing is that in his indignation, Mr Edwards is more offensive and patronising to the people portrayed in the book than the authors could ever have been. He refers to them as 'the familiar freaks gallery'. In fact, a glance at the photographs in the book will show that the London photographs are predominantly of quite ordinary people, albeit in very depressing circumstances. There are very few pictures of drug-takers and very few pictures which are drink-related.

But it is in his last paragraph that Mr Edwards is particularly revealing. He writes, 'none of us' (meaning housing activists) 'needs this coffee table book. So who does?' It is exactly this tendency to preach primarily to the converted that we are trying to get away from. Mr Edwards may have an image in his mind which he feels is the 'correct' one to avoid both, as he sees it, stigmatising the homeless, while at the same time communicating effectively with the rest of the population. If he has such an image we would be truly glad to consider it.

Sun spot

Malcolm Withers, Joint Chapels Liaison Committee, Sun/News of The World, *London EC4*

For the record, journalists on the *Sun* were not 'noticeably silent when the production workers lobbied for a statement in support of the miners to be published in the *Sun* on 27 June'. The Father of the Chapel, Deputy and Treasurer were at the meetings and indeed gave both advice and support. Like every official at these meetings, however, we had to consult our Chapels.

If Mark Hollingsworth (*NS* 6 July) goes on believing all that a Socialist Worker Party *Sun* journalist told him, without checking, then it could lead to Kelvin McKenzie offering him a job!

Australian women vote left

Marion Sawer, Australian National University, Canberra

In 'Sisters move to the left' (*NS* 15 June) Barbara Ehrenreich says that 'nowhere except in the United States, as far as I can discover, have women actually moved to the left of men'. In the last Australian federal election (March 1983) more young women than young men voted for the Australian Labor Party. This was particularly marked in the 18-20 year old group where 73 per cent of women but only 65 per cent of men polled in capital cities voted for the Australian Labor Party. Overall the same proportion of men and women in capital cities voted for the Australian Labour Party (52½ per cent) — but younger women had definitely moved to the left of men.

FEEDBACK

Therapy for racism

FEW BLACK people would be surprised by the findings of the recent Policy Studies Institute report that the black population in Britain is no better off today in terms of 'racial equality' than the black immigrants of the 1950s.

But the report is causing a stir among at least one new group of experts — the teachers of 'Racism Awareness'. These 'consultants' make it their mission (as well as their business) to remove unsightly racism wherever it may crop up — in police officers, social workers, teachers, managers and so on. It is done by simply teaching them kindly but firmly to be 'aware' of racism or in more religious terminology to exorcise what the British Council of Churches calls 'The Enemy Within'.

Racism Awareness courses are usually expensive. Currently the GLC, for example, pays £2,045 for a four-day course to train ten people. One black GLC employee told me: 'With the threatened closure of the GLC, time and money are limited, some of us feel that the money could be spent more usefully than on teaching a few white people to contemplate their navels'. But once established, Racism Awareness courses are difficult to get rid of; not only does the CRE's April 1984 Code of Practice for employers specifically prescribe them but they have the backing of a number of trade union bureaucracies.

In fact, Racism Awareness is the mouse which Labour has brought forth from its mammoth concern about racism; and what is so nice about it in Labour Party terms is that it involves nothing which the establishment would find objectionable — no organising by black people, no anti-racist struggle of any sort. Because although seen by some people as soft anti-racism (which could at least help change those who are unwilling to think politically) Racism Awareness does, in fact, contradict anti-racism in terms of its role, its theoretical basis and even on a practical level. It is a management strategy developed and popularised in America by Judy Katz, Assistant Professor of Human Relations at the University of Oklahoma, and introduced into Britain by the GLC-funded Racism Awareness Programme Unit, RAPU.

Katz, whose book *White Awareness* is the standard handbook for 'all human relations practitioners, psychologists, social workers, church group leaders, personnel officers and members of other helping professions', tells us that 'human relations' is being used to increase productivity in American workplaces. The racism awareness aspect of it, then, is to 'manage' the conflict arising from racism, and in course of this, inevitably to contain the struggle against it. Put another way, racism awareness is part of the social control strategy implemented as a response to the black uprisings of 1981.

This particular role of Racism Awareness, how it is linked to 'multiculturalism' and why it is important to fight it are the themes of a new pamphlet 'Police Racism and Union Collusion' published by the National Convention of Black Teachers (NCBT). The pamphlet is about John Fernandes's struggle against police racism, the colluding union being NATFHE. The pamphlet points out that Fernandes's experiences provide a clear example of the different implications of genuine anti-racist teaching and racism awareness. While the police were unwilling to accept the first, banning Fernandes from the Metropolitan Police Cadet School in December 1982, in 1983 they invited two Racism Awareness experts from RAPU to give weekend courses (an invitation which the experts accepted despite accusations that they were 'scabbing' on Fernandes). Currently the police get their racism awareness at a centre set up at the initiative of the Home Office at Brunel University.

On a theoretical level, the assumption of Racism Awareness is that we are all working towards the ideals of a basically pluralistic society, composed entirely of 'different but equal' groups. This view jettisons such concepts as imperialism and class so that racism, unlinked to either, can be seen as a temporarily disfiguring *individual* disease — an affliction which can be cured by therapy. Also Racism Awareness, like the recently developed academic doctrine of ethnicity, sees culture (in its most anthropological, and least dynamic form) as the most important determinant — more fundamental than economic or political forces. Ethnicity sees black youths' acts in defending themselves and their communities as a result of their anti-authoritarian culture, rickets in the Asian community are emerging not from a low standard of living but from the culture of those who don't know how to eat properly, and so on.

The corollary of this is that if white racism is only cultural and attitudinal, so too is the anger and rebelliousness of black people. What they need is not economic or political power, but lessons in 'coming to terms' with the reality of being black. British Racism Awareness experts have in fact outdone Katz in this — they are now providing classes for black people who they say 'have a lot of problems with their identity'. Once this 'education' is built into institutions, the State has a powerful means of intervention in the lives of the black population.

Finally Racism Awareness has an important legal role. It is helping white employers accused of racial discrimination by their black employees. They can now say in their favour that they observe the CRE's Code of Practice and provide training. In the trial of the Newham 8, multicultural courses were mentioned, presumably as evidence of good intentions of the school in whose playground so much racist violence occurred. Racism Awareness will not only serve the same purpose; it is likely to eventually replace punitive sentencing for those found guilty of racial attack.

Amrit Wilson

Police Racism & Union Collusion is available from NCBT, PO Box 30, Pinner, Middx, £1.25 incl p&p.

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All drawings: Liz Mackie

Lisa Appignanesi

Happily ever after

SOME FIVE YEARS ago if anyone had asked me to write a piece about romantic fiction, I would probably have shuffled my feet in embarrassment and proceeded to tap out a high-minded socio-critical thesis. I would have talked about a banal retrograde genre which falsely structures women's expectations by holding out the carrot of a conjugal happily-ever-after as the ultimate (phallic) reward for good and submissive little girls. I might have pointed out how our sardonic hero's lithe approaches to our innocent heroine often border on rape; mentioned the vapidity of the language; the descriptions of exotic places, interiors, fashion, recipes, which echo the contents of women's magazines and set a limited agenda for women's concerns.

None of this would, of course, have stopped me from secretly indulging in an occasional Mills & Boon binge, and thoroughly though guiltily enjoying those implausible encounters between unawakened Janes and mocking Rochesters, those Cinderella-like transformations, that peculiar atmosphere breathless with the gestures which announce passion.

Now the cultural climate has subtly shifted. It is *permissible* to take pleasure in the products of popular culture. The miasma of the great tradition — which in this century at least equated the popular with the contemptible — is gradually lifting. The romance in one's hand is no longer the necessary signal of one's status at the very bottom of the class divisions of literature.

Then, too, the women's movement has entered a new moment. No longer is sexuality relegated to a discourse of orgasm — clitoral or otherwise — which somewhere in its syntax forgets that we are also people who live with and occasionally love other people, not only anatomical parts. Of late, unconscious desires, the full contradictory play of female sexuality, fantasy and, yes, romance, have begun to preoccupy us far more.

None of this brings us any closer to understanding why popular romance should have such a powerful grip on women's imagination. Why is it that in a period when women's aspirations have substantially changed, when their potential for acting in the world is greater than ever before, a genre which celebrates a conventional male-female relationship to the exclusion of all else should sell to the tune of 250 million books a year in the US? In Britain, the statistics tell us that one in three women buy Mills & Boon romances at a rate of over 12 million copies a year.

Certainly the answer cannot lie in a sophisticated marketing apparatus alone. Advertisers may be able to sell a product once, but the second time round one has to want it. So what is it that triggers women to immerse themselves time and again in tales which are the simplified progeny of Jane Eyre? Is it merely that in difficult periods of transition one wants the warm blanket of old-fashioned forms to curl into?

I put the question to a friend who happened to ring as I was writing. 'It's like sugar in your tea,' he said. 'It sweetens life, makes you feel good.' 'It's not as simple as that,' I moaned. 'Well, it's about love,' he replied. 'We all want love.'

'What about men?' I asked. 'They don't read romances.'

'That's their problem. They probably should.'

'Perhaps,' I suggested wickedly, 'they have enough love: their mothers love them; their girlfriends, lovers, wives surround them with the gestures of affection.'

'Nonsense,' he proclaimed.

But I wonder. . .

It is true that the contemporary romance's girl meets boy, endless complications, delays, misunderstandings, happy-end narrative — which has now vanished from the pages of serious fiction — provides an escapist scenario to sweeten the humdrum monotony or harshness of everyday life. More important perhaps is the directness with which these books speak to their readers, create an aura of intimacy like that between parent and child at the ritual hours of the bedtime story.

No problem of identification here, no attempt to disrupt it by hurdles of style or structure. The reader is, for the brief suspended span of the tale, the heroine of the book. And what delights befall her! She is the *centre* of attention. Not only does the book take place within the orbit of her own consciousness, but each ordinary experience is imbued with significance merely because she exists. Cool, distant, unfathomably mysterious Mr Right has charged into her sphere and electrified it. Mundane activities — the repetitive washing, dressing, cooking, eating, all of which occupy a given space within these fictions — are transformed into resonant acts, since they are performed for another and within the compass of another's gaze.

It is love, of course, the state of being in love, which creates this magic circle of meaning. Much as we might wish women's moments of

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transcendence to come from other realms of experience, this is still the one which, whatever the gender of the partner, most of us share. Pointless to say that these books fail to detail the aftermath of the lovers' high, the gritty realism of disappointment or the social practicalities of marriage. The idealised eternal present they inhabit is the time-out-of-time of fairy tale. Perhaps it could also be likened to the time of the sexual encounter itself: constantly repeated, like the structure of these books, it is yet continually new, time-caught in its own moment, strangely without history.

There are other interesting elements in these category romances which may help to explain their popularity among a range of women. The heroes, sketched in with a few rough strokes which leave personalising detail to the reader's imagination, are always the embodiments of a mysterious power: social as well as sexual. It is they who in a sense control the tides of the books. Like Daddy of the Freudian family romance, their behaviour appears quite irrational to the little girl heroine. But, after plummeting from bliss to despair, it is our apparently passive heroine who, at the end, holds the keys of power. The hero's moodiness, incomprehensible actions — the waiting and anxiety which determine the momentum of the plot — have all been due to the fact that he has been passionately in love with her all along. She is the sole object of desire and that rampant desire can now be domesticated.

The taming is important. The rape fantasy which underscores the work of some of the most popular of M&B authors, like Charlotte Lamb and Anne Mather, touches on one of women's most basic fears. Men, on the whole, are physically the stronger, the sexual aggressors. One is afraid; increasingly so perhaps, in an age where equality between the sexes seems to have engendered growing male aggression. But there is another side to that coin. If the male is the repository of sexuality, then the woman's own sexual stirrings can be attributed to him. They are *his* responsibility. In these books, the cause of the heroine's sexual feelings is always the mysterious male force. Her sexuality is, so to speak, laid at his feet. Yet in the resolution of these tales, the rapist is tamed and sexuality, legitimated by the bonds of forever, is reappropriated by the woman, taken into her own control.

There is a lesson here which need have nothing to do with the 'women want marriage' banner. These popular romances may express a deeper dilemma. After centuries in which the control of their sexuality was out of their hands, a decade of the pill is not enough to allow even independent women easily to reappropriate their own sexuality. The promise or fantasy of 'forever', the sense or illusion of uniqueness, is still, for many, a necessary starting point.

Much more could be said about the appeal of these romances. By treating men as other, they may reinvigorate for a mass of older women readers that excitement which characterised courtship and which has long gone in the domesticity of everyday marriage. By idealising men, they harken back not only to the daddy of childhood, but also to a world we have lost where men did indeed inhabit a social sphere closed to women, one which clothed them in power.

This is not to say that women don't want their equality, but in the ambivalent sphere of the emotions one can want the cake of independence and the icing of dependency as well. And there is an illusion of security in being dependent on the stronger.

Finally, it needs to be said that, unlike the vast expanses of American bestsellers replete with sexual expertise, these romances deal with a world of physical *feeling*. Sometimes clumsy or funny in their evasion of named sexual parts, they yet avoid the bestseller's separation of sex and emotion. Personally, the sexual manipulation of the bestseller, its orgastic drive, gives me about as much erotic or emotional pleasure as watching an aged jogger perspiring through Hyde Park.

Looked at through the lenses of social puritanism or literary tact, romance may indeed leave a lot to be desired. Yet, like the sugar in our tea, it is a momentary sweetener. More than that, its very popularity suggests that it can indicate something of the basic structure of female emotions and sexuality. □

Lisa Appignanesi is Director of Talks at the ICA and author of Cabaret: The First Hundred Years *recently published by Methuen, as well as several romances.*

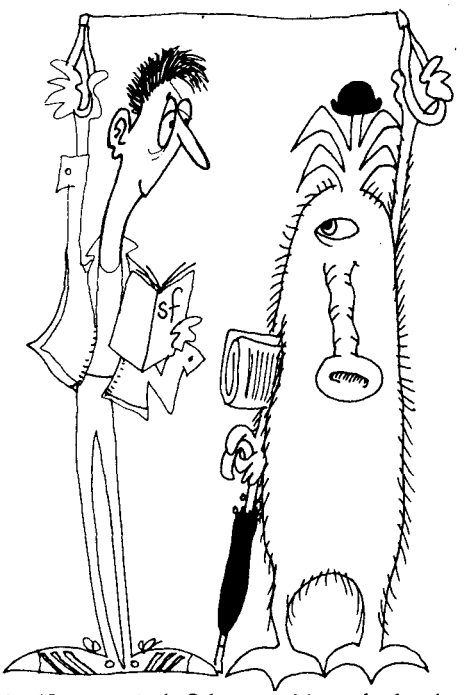
SCIENCE FICTION
Colin Greenland

Making new earths

TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE congregate in the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle, on a damp and windy Friday in May. The occasion is Tynecon II: a science fiction convention. It will be something like a college reunion, something like a political rally and, in odd corners of the bookroom and the restaurant, something like a sales conference. Certainly people will listen to speeches and readings and panel discussions, compete at quizzes and participate in workshops, but more than any of these things they will drink. They will drink with dedication and vigour, but without becoming violent. And they will talk, talk all night.

Contrary to expectation, science fiction fans do not talk about black holes or anatomise the plots of obscure stories by A. E. Van Vogt. Well, perhaps some do; but next to them there are people talking about Grace Jones, or Jewish demography, or the Australian electoral system. Downstairs other people are watching a film: not *Star Wars*, though they liked that too, but *Atomic Cafe*; Godard's *Alphaville*; or Jacques Rivette's daft and beautiful *Céline et Julie Vont en Bateau*. The authors participating are not spaceship merchants either. Alasdair Gray reads from *1982, Janine*; Russell Hoban displays a copy of the fresco that inspired *Riddley Walker*; John Middleton Murry is present as his sf persona Richard Cowper. They all used to follow the sf magazines, in the old days; they are not surprised to be invited here. There is a logic to the eternally innovative purpose of sf that will ideally tend to jettison old forms and experiment with new. The organisers of Tynecon II have recognised that the literary interest of sf is not at the cold and heavy core of the genre, which is now being broken up to fuel pyrotechnic movies and video games, but at the nebulous outer edges, where books are not branded 'SF' by their publishers, though their heritage is obvious to everyone but the literary reviewers.

Of course, the fans whose efforts have produced Tynecon II and a dozen other conventions this year (including the Easter Eurocon, ten times the size of Tynecon) are only a tiny, active minority of the sf readership. They are the ones who care. Others wouldn't dream of devoting their lives to a form which is



itself so sceptical. Others read intently, but in solitude. The existence of the fan sub-culture, which permits much close communication among and between editors, writers and readers, is what distinguishes sf from other genre fiction. Despite the founding brief to inspect the unexpected, the sf that really sells these days, the books that go beyond the coterie to the bestseller lists, are as formulaic and retrospective as any hospital romance or war thriller. Heinlein, Herbert, Asimov and Clarke still trundle out enormous replicas of the works that made them famous 30 years ago. As Gollancz editor Malcolm Edwards explained at Tynecon, it's the guaranteed returns from these that make it possible to publish new and original writers at all. They are household names and sell by inertia to readers who *want* inertia.

Others find it in sword and sorcery, a Pre-Raphaelite sub-genre of dragons and heroic quests that is always close at hand to sf. In loyal imitation of Tolkien and Moorcock, these books come in threes, an effective marketing tactic, according to David Tate of the specialist

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fantasy bookshop *Forbidden Planet*. 'A new book on its own might sell or it might not. But they'll buy anything if it's the first of a trilogy.' Here is a curiosity: the readers who want to be assured there is more of the same before they even know what the same is. The trilogy is a classical, closed structure. In their uniform covers, the three books seem to promise continuity, stability, while being less daunting and unwieldy than the same number of pages in one volume (and retailing for two or three times the price).

On books of heroic fantasy, the terms 'epic' and 'saga', summoned up to hype all today's thick popular novels, regain their suggestions of primeval splendour. Many of these series, like Julian May's *Saga of Pliocene Exile*, shrewdly blend the muscular nostalgia of sword and sorcery with the cerebral extravagance of science fiction.

AS WELL as these quasi-historicals, the corpus of sf contains equivalents for the detective story, western and soft porn, because it is not so much a *kind* of writing as a *way* of writing. As Patrick Parrinder noted in *Science Fiction: Its Criticism and Teaching*:

> It seems quite likely that science fiction acts not only to propagate dreams of liberation, but to sublimate the anxieties of those who fear the impermanence of the status quo rather than its repressiveness.

The diversity of its functions is one reason for the multiplicity of its forms. Indeed, it's hard at first to see any signs of kinship between, say, the epistemological frenzies of Ian Watson and the limpid moralities of Vonda McIntyre, or Larry Niven's interplanetary architecture and Joy Chant's modest pastorals. But futurism and archaism have more in common than their names suggest, as Toynbee pointed out.

> Futurism and Archaism are, both alike, attempts to break with an irksome Present by taking a flying leap out of it into another reach of the stream of Time without abandoning the plane of mundane life on Earth.

Toynbee was not talking about sf, which apparently abandons the plane of mundane life at the flick of a sentence. 'Beetles glinted in the tall grass,' writes Brian Aldiss. 'Both suns shone.' Or Mary Gentle: 'With his slender six-fingered hands linked before his chest, he resembled nothing so much as a praying mantis.'

The exotic detail enacts a scrupulous rejection of the familiar, but sf is not therefore more escapist than any other fiction. That is an error of those who have no such suspicions about tales of marital acrobatics in Hollywood or the reminiscences of vets. 'Escapism' presumes there is somewhere to go. Not at all. By metaphor or by resonant omission, all the fake worlds of science fiction describe our own. Otherwise they would not be intelligible, let alone interesting.

There are no human beings at all in John Brunner's latest, *The Crucible of Time*, and so a peculiar thing happens. Brunner firmly and repeatedly equips his aliens with unknown organs, yet they stubbornly resist visualisation as anything but human. The alien exists to describe the human, as in Christopher Evans's *The Insider*, whose narrator is possessed by a psychic parasite.

Theoretical critic Darko Suvin calls this function of sf 'cognitive estrangement'. To treat the familiar as alien, the alien as familiar, is potentially subversive, which is why the Women's Press are issuing a new sf line, beginning with Marge Piercy and Joanna Russ, a dove and a hawk. As a whole, however, the political consciousness of sf is low, and may not be raised very far. This is not only because of the dead weight of the patriarchs, but also because sf is fundamentally incoherent. Sequels, series and imitations notwithstanding, every story potentially expresses a separate universe. The possibilities for doctrine are enormous, as Doris Lessing has been pleased to discover, but only within a context of continuing apocalypse. If the writers can make a new Earth each time, they can make a new Heaven too; and so can their readers.

The conditions of sf are, in fact, more favourable for anarchism than anything else. Indeed, an sf convention, with its self-appointed committee, its mixture of professionals and amateurs, old hands and novices, its pervasive informality and its scope for spontaneity, often permits something very like it.

Sf readers frequently want to write sf themselves; many pros began as fans. Today's fans, given the chance, may become pros. Anyone interested in the possibilities could do well to have a look at *Interzone*, a quarterly magazine edited and published by an unpaid collective of writers and readers dissatisfied with the meagre state of the current market for short stories of sf and fantasy. *Interzone* is available only from specialist sf dealers, or for £1.50 (£5 for a year's subscription) from 124 Osborne Road, Brighton BN1 6LU. □

Colin Greenland is one of the editors of Interzone *and author of* The Entropy Exhibition; *his first novel,* Daybreak on a Different Mountain, *will be published in September by Allen & Unwin.*

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CRIME
Ken Worpole

Watching the detectives

CRIME FICTION, the literature of the night, from time to time re-discovers its radical origins. William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (whose sub-title *Things As They Are* clearly indicated its social and critical intentions) was the first novel to use a murder as the central incident. Published in 1794, a year after the dangerously radical *Inquiry into the Principles of Political Justice*, its grim tale of arbitrary persecution, false imprisonment and fugitive despair clearly echoed Godwin's own presentiments about his own liability to prosecution and political imprisonment. Similarly, the Paris 'Mysteries' of Eugene Sue and other *feuilleton* writers of the 1830s, which had as large a readership among the working classes in England as they did in France, were tales of an impoverished and disenfranchised urban proletariat deliberately excluded from the civic realm.

Today crime fiction remains the most popular of all genre literature, with over a quarter of all books bought in Britain and America being crime novels. Crime fiction tops the library borrowings too. It is, significantly, the most international of all literatures, and a street poll asking people to name a French writer or an American writer would almost certainly give a higher place to Georges Simenon or Raymond Chandler than, say, Albert Camus or Thomas Wolfe. According to the most recent UNESCO figures, Agatha Christie remains the most translated novelist in the world with a current 282 translations in 26 different languages. What people popularly know about other countries has often been mediated through crime fiction, as the spectacular success of *Gorky Park* with its Moscow setting — the subject of much discussion — still indicates. The detective novels of Sjowall and Wahloo paint a disillusioned portrait of Swedish consumer society and political consensus. In the Soviet Union, Julian Semyonov, a crime writer, has sold more than 20 million copies of his thrillers, though none has yet been translated.

The cross-cultural and trans-national success of the crime novel has meant other things too. For it can happen that specifically national literary traditions become too self-referential and insular, and new cultural movements look elsewhere for a literature that speaks more directly to new experiences. This was clearly the case with a number of French writers in the post-war period who looked to the American dime novel — and the American *film noir* — for a more acute portrayal of personal alienation than that found in the bourgeois novel. Camus admitted that he could not have written *The Outsider* had it not been for the direct influence of James M. Cain's *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. Horace McCoy, author of *They Shoot Horses Don't They?* and *No Pockets in a Shroud*,

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was described in the late 1930s as 'the most discussed writer in France'.

In Britain, where Raymond Chandler admitted he had found his most responsive readership, stoical and world-weary Philip Marlowe (particularly when played in the film versions of Chandler's novels by Humphrey Bogart) captured the imagination of many male working-class readers here in ways which the English country-house novel and its gentleman detectives clearly could not. It was Chandler who volunteered to write the introduction to Frank Norman's *Bang to Rights* published in 1958 and one of the early texts of the 'new-wave' of British documentary, vernacular writing. Albert Finney's portrayal of bingo-caller Eddie Ginley in the film version of Neville Smith's *Gumshoe* caught that emotional link between emergent 1950s working-class cultural style and its discovery of American popular literature and music.

Not that other struggles over the political uses of detective fiction hadn't happened in Britain earlier. The country-house murder — whose development was not unconnected with the 1919 Public Libraries Act which advocated the County Library System which brought into library usership a much wider range of people, particularly outside the cities — was contested in the 1930s by the development of a number of anti-fascist thrillers. Andy Croft has recently compiled a bibliography of these and has pointed out how appropriate the form of the thriller was to the international anti-fascist movement. Bruce Hamilton, brother of still one of the most under-rated 1930s novelists, Patrick Hamilton, wrote two of the best of these thrillers towards the end of that decade, *Rex v Rhodes* in 1937 and *Traitor's Way* in 1938. Of course Graham Greene and Eric Ambler also contributed important thrillers in the 1930s on these themes.

Crime fiction has clearly come into its own now as a potentially respectable and serious form of writing, even though popularising stunts like that of the Book Marketing Council's recent 'Twelve best novels in English since 1945' began ironically by excluding popular genre fiction. Partly this is because some of the functions which earlier crime fiction fulfilled are now more admirably served by television. The most developed British private investigators in the post-James Bond era have been those of television rather than fiction — Marker, Hazell, Callan, Eddie Shoestring, among others. And all the car-chasing and cliff-hanging is now done by British or American crime-busters on television rather than by Sexton Blake or Simon Templar type heroes in half-a-crown novels. The space has been cleared for a more psychological or political approach, and the novels of women crime writers such as Patricia Highsmith and P.D. James have a claim to some seriousness of response.

Left publishers Pluto Press have adroitly stepped into this cleared space with their Pluto Crime series, featuring novels by London feminist Gillian Slovo, American radicals Gordon Demarco and Nancy Milton and Catalan Communist party executive member Manuel Montalban. Whether they manage to break through to the mainstream crime-fiction-reading public remains to be seen, though in publishing terms there are quite clear structural problems. For people either read crime fiction as library books or buy it as cheap format paperbacks. How the 'trade' paperback crime novel will fare is a real question. Not that Pluto have an exclusive franchise on radical thrillers. Two recent novels by Julian Rathbone, *The Euro-Killers* and *Watching the Detectives*, seem to me to be admirable and perceptive European anti-nuclear thrillers. And William MacIllvanney's *Laidlaw* published in 1977 remains one of my very favourite novels of any kind of that decade.

But what makes the form so popular? Why do so many people settle down of an evening to read about mystery and detection, murder and human pathology? It is surely partly because, in common with much 'formulaic' literature, a familiar narrative structure is of great re-assurance and support in the activity of reading. A crime is committed, an investigator is commissioned to solve the mystery and at the end all is resolved and set back in its place. The reader is assured that having entered the labyrinth of fiction a way out is pre-ordained. As with fables and fairy stories, at the end of the novel we find ourselves back in the room again. Much serious literary criticism, from Matthew Arnold onwards, has asserted that literature is somehow more important than life. The forms of popular literature have always contested this, realising that all books have to end sometime.

Important too is the narrative pace of the crime novel or thriller, in contrast to the convoluted prolixity of much British fictional writing — particularly the traditional middle-class novel of manners and social etiquette. The detective novel is really a popular form of semiology in which nothing is what it appears to

be and everything is a shifting world of signs and meanings. Hence its radical and critical potential. For far too long 'high' literature and 'popular' literature have been set up in opposition to each other, by Marxist critics as well as by traditional English literary criticism. A *cordon sanitaire* has been established around the 'great tradition' of Austen, Eliot, Conrad, James and Lawrence and the minor works of the bourgeois tradition, a tradition which is now more *studied* than *read*. In the latter part of the 20th century in which national traditions have been opened up by the vernacular energies of popular literature — particularly from America — it is time to understand how closely today all forms of writing are inter-related. There is more to a landscape than mountains. □

Ken Worpole's new book Reading by Numbers, *a study of contemporary publishing and popular culture, will be published by Comedia in September.*

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FICTION
Richard Deveson

Discord

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THOMAS M. DISCH *Cape* £8.95
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JAMES BUCHAN *Hamish Hamilton* £8.95
The Story of Henri Tod
WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR *Allen Lane* £8.95

No, it's not genre fiction that's the touble. It's genre fiction that is trying to say something serious, or that may be trying to say something serious, only you can't be sure.

All genre fiction involves, obviously, some manipulation the reader goes along with: you pretend to drop your usual ontological assumptions so as to let yourself be scared (ghost stories); you agree to be kept under-informed in order to let yourself get excited (thrillers). The trouble comes when the necessary manipulation keeps you damagingly under-informed about something worth knowing more of, or gives rise to a preposterous plot for the sake of an ulterior thesis, or seems to lead the author into giving house room to dubious beliefs — when, in other words, the needs of genre and seriousness clash. They don't have to, of course, and it's exhilarating when they don't; but they can. Herewith three examples.

Thomas M. Disch's **The Businessman** is a ghost story with not one ghost but many. The slobby Minneapolis-St Paul executive Bob Glandier has killed his wife Giselle, who comes back from the claustrophobia of the grave to haunt him. Giselle's mother Joy-Ann quickly dies off too, to reappear in paradise and meet up with the ghost of Adah Menken, the actress famous mainly for impersonating Byron's Mazeppa near-naked in the 1860s. The spirit of John Berryman, still freshly bloodied from his suicide jump into the Mississippi, comes along later, as does a malign creature born from Glandier's rape of his late wife's ghost. After a string of (unterrifying) murders and an inefficient battle between the good and evil spirits, a comically grisly sort of justice is finally done.

As a *jeu d'esprit,* as genre, the book is consistently very clever. The ghosts act and talk and think like so many fictional characters and much of the entertainment comes from the different kinds of dealings they have with one another and with the 'real' people inside whose heads they 'actually' reside. Disch also pokes a lot of fun at American suburban kitsch: the action and settings are like a spoof of the made-for-TV horror movie. And yet, Berryman is there for the sake of us intellectuals. We might wonder, 'Where's the beef?'

The clash between genre and seriousness occurs because Disch includes a number of religio-philosophical reflections which he really seems to want us to ponder. Are the various souls passing through stages of redemption (or otherwise)? Does 'evil', as a metaphysical entity, exist? Do spirits have free will? The fact that the book's events, when one reflects on them, are full of inconsistencies and logical impossibilities hardly allays one's doubts about the meaningfulness of such questions. Or take a passage right at the end, which attempts to describe what a disembodied soul can be said to know or feel: 'That flowers cry like children, demanding a doting adult attention; that the dome of the sky and the lens of the eye rhyme to each other, and both are real; that all heat is dissipated as a function of time; that distance is God's supreme fiction.' Is this just specious rhetoric, part of the manipulation? Or is it serious? Which is worse?

The shorthand, understatement, name dropping and, in general, provision of minimal necessary information that are the stock-in-trade of the thriller often manipulate the reader into pretending that he or she is as *au fait* with political intrigue and violence as any real-life spymaster or agent. James Buchan's **A Parish of Rich Women**, though, is written curiously *against* the reader: the compression and omission seem almost intended to make you feel excluded. I know all this, it seems to say, and you don't. There is some very strong writing in the story, which moves from London to the Lebanon as the hero leaves his milieu of druggy rich friends and extravagant parties to pursue an obscure mission during the Israeli advance on Beirut. But the war in the Lebanon is a serious enough subject, heaven knows, for one to want to be told a lot more about it than is divulged by the admittedly impressive reportage here. On the other hand, the book is badly *over*-serious in its suggestion of a parallel between the condition of the Palestinians and the self-destructive rootlessness of Sloane Ranger youth. The upper-class anti-Semitism of some of the characters, incidentally, seems all too true to life.

Information is no problem in William F. Buckley Jr's **The Story of Henri Tod**: officials are simply wheeled in to give briefings. The dandyish CIA agent Blackford Oakes rides again in what must be the millionth Berlin thriller to have been perpetrated. It is 1961 and the Wall is about to go up, only the West doesn't know it yet. Henri Tod, brilliant former refugee (ed. St Paul's and Trinity, Cambridge), is running an underground anti-Communist resistance group in the city; his beautiful sister (ed. Auschwitz and Vorkuta) has become a tool of the KGB. Oakes's job, apart from fitting in the usual weightless sex ('they met, tasted, devoured, and had each other, so to speak, by acclamation'), is to use Tod to find out what Ulbricht is up to; predictably, the other side replies by playing the sister.

Here the manipulation damages the plot. Buckley's historical realism has Oakes (an agent of the US government, after all) accede, albeit unwillingly, to the partition of Berlin; his romantic yet serious wish that partition should have been resisted leads him to make Oakes throw politics to the winds and stage a quixotic, soloistic ending. In turn, ironically, the incredibleness of this climax casts doubts on the ulterior thesis that provoked it. □

Matthew Sweeney

The obituarist

Lives, these days, in a one-way street
next to a banjaxed launderette
with a Manx cat who jumps from sills
two floors up, and returns unmaimed.
All the world's jets pass overhead
whenever he sits down to tinkle Chopin.
And he's stuck with a crooked postman.
Each noon it's beef in oyster sauce
at the local Chinese, and a hunt
through reliable headlines in the Times.
His file of unfinished works includes
Böll, Reagan, Sinatra and the Pope. . .
Recovery affects him greatly, as does
a corpse catching him on the hop.
He once worked on a friend's notice
then brought tulips to the hospital.
They made a golfing date for June.
After he got home he made additions
inspired by a propped-up photograph
and tumblerful of peaty malt.

Academic Year

D. J. Enright

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26 July *£7.95* *256pp*

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PAPERBACKS
Alan Brien

Popular prejudice

'His father has a boot factory, so he's exempted from war service on work of national importance.'

'Looks like a Jew-boy.'

'He is, and he stinks of money. . . He's going to sit at the table of those two girls, and pick up acquaintance. . . If they giggle, they're lost.'

'I shouldn't think they would,' said Dirk. 'They look nice girls.'

'They do,' said von Bodenheim. 'In fact, they are. . . But they may be hungry.'

'Good God,' said Dirk. 'You don't mean. . .'

'I do,' said von Bodenheim, pushing his chair back. 'I shall go, I think. I am fairly hardened, but the triumphs of the Chosen Race are more than my stomach will stand.'

It seems extraordinary enough that the spy story from which this unpleasant exchange in a 1917 Cologne nightclub is extracted should be re-issued in 1984, but even more surprising is the date of its original publication when, according to T. J. Binyon's introduction, it proved 'an immediate and immense success'.

I hope, for the sake of all our cherished beliefs about a Britain united in detestation of Nazi racialism, your guess like mine was wrong. Manning Coles's **Drink To Yesterday** (Everyman, £2.50) climbed high among the best-sellers of the year in 1940.

'Manning Coles' did not exist — it was a pseudonym formed from the surnames of Adelaide Manning and Cyril Henry Coles whose collaboration on 30 novels began with this. *Drink To Yesterday,* despite its nastiness, deserves to be ranked with Buchan, its hero perhaps a more convincing and contemporary secret agent because of his split loyalties, moral shudders, doubts and confusions.

Binyon tends to undersell it, though noting its original, daring touches, the spy hero sliding from persona to persona in mid-paragraph, already in the opening chapter a corpse being investigated by the coroner. The rest of the narrative is an extended flash-back while he waits to be assassinated by someone the reader does not identify until the final pages. What Binyon oddly fails to comment upon is Coles's own continuation as an important figure in British Intelligence, from 1939 to 1958, despite such flaunting of a pathological hatred of Jews in the second year of the war against Hitler.

Von Bodenheim is, admittedly, an enemy operator, but there is no sign our man does not eagerly share his prejudices. Indeed, when peace arrives, Dirk sourly recalls the Junker aristocrat's phrase about the 'the triumphs of the Chosen Race' when he observes 'the Jew-boy' still prospering, while the authors in their own voice regret that this race of 'slimy little beasts' should still survive.

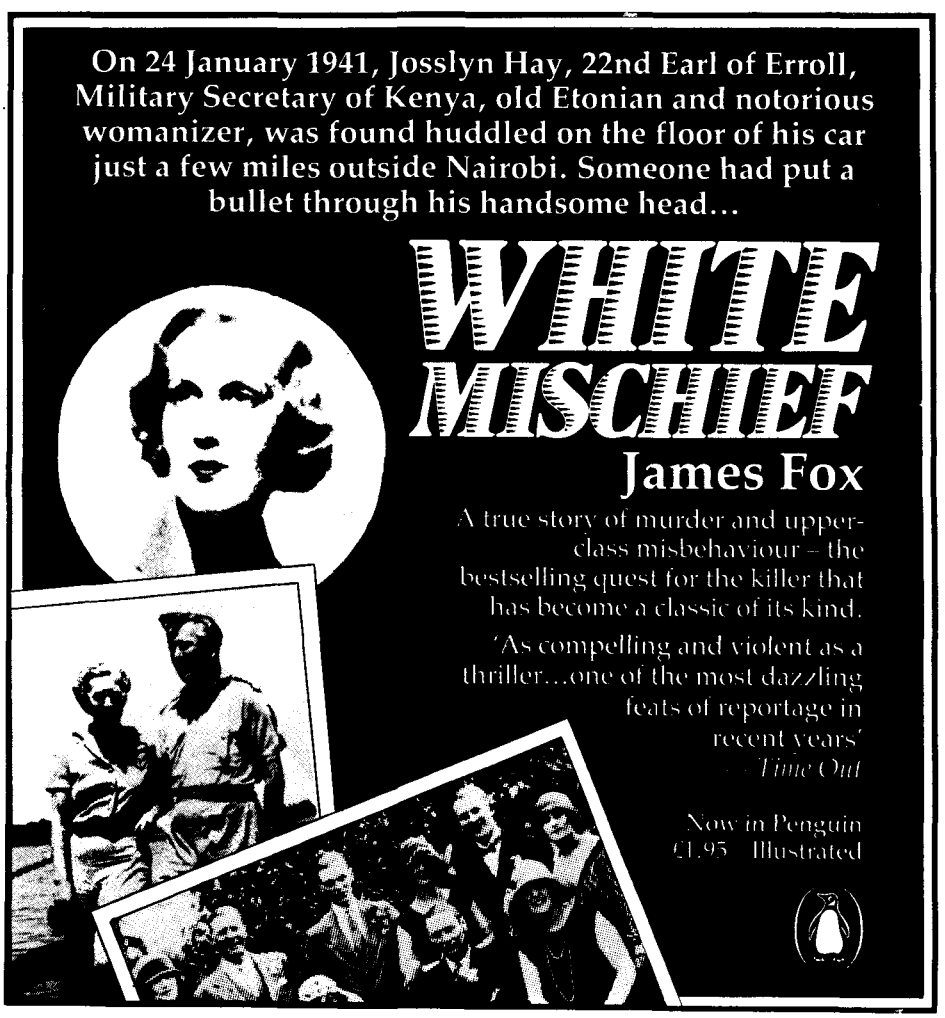
There is fortunately no chance that the paperback edition could ever repeat the sales of 1940 in 1984. But the popular fiction successes of today are usually just as reactionary, biassed and blinkered, even if their assumptions are lightly buried an inch beneath the surface. In them, occasional outsiders can now reach the top, but only at the price of becoming indistinguishable from the insiders they have overcome. What remains constant is the message that money confers on its possessors good looks, perfect taste, amusing conversation, long life, constant visibility and, despite the means, lovingly described, by which it has been so scandalously obtained, an ultimate moral authority over the rest of us. The idea, still cosseted in progressive circles, that what is widely popular must also embody, even in a somewhat disguised form, the true, the good and the beautiful, cannot survive reading a couple of issues of the *Sun.*

In non-fiction, it is noticeable that among books about the occult, the supernormal, extra-sensory perception, telepathy, UFOs, psychic surgery and the like, those by believers far outsell those by sceptics. For this reason, I commend **The Loch Ness Mystery Solved** (Star, £2.50) by Ronald Binns.

It does not matter whether you are interested in the Monster's existence or not — by chapter three you will be anyway. What counts is the way Binns sets out, like a modern Sherlock Holmes, without preconceptions, to scrutinise the evidence. Unlike the Nessy-worshippers, he always goes back to first sources, sets every quote in context, monitors the changing testimony over the years, isolates the self-interest involved, canvasses the alternative explanations, ending up with an elegant literary diagram, analysing the history of an illusion, which is both exciting and convincing. Voltaire could not have done better.

The way society punishes its transgressors (when found out), automatically assumes the guilt of the deviant, the outsider or the nonconformist, overlooks evidence that contradicts its assumptions, is vividly demonstrated in **Famous Trials** (Penguin, £3.50), a selection by John Mortimer from an earlier Penguin five volumes, themselves abridged from *Notable British Trials*, edited by the Hodges, Harry and James, father and son. Even this version — I would have preferred a re-issue of the original paperback quintet — makes marvellously gripping, disturbing and radically educational reading. Mortimer, whose name is splashed across the cover, adds little. Many of his introductory comments are either obvious or more-or-less meaningless. Typically somewhere between the two is — 'Murder, as is well known, like divorce and Christmas, mainly takes place in the family circle.'

There is no reason to fear that, in popular fiction, you will be reduced to identifying with the villains, so long as Keith Waterhouse is in production. **In the Mood** (Black Swan, £2.95) is the best novel he has ever written, with the love life of three adolescents in 1950 remembered, re-invented, transmogrified, in a fashion that it is not ridiculous (though some may find it off-putting) to characterise as Proustian. Reluctant as I am to point in the same direction as Auberon Waugh, I have to subscribe my name to his testimony after this book — 'Waterhouse is one of the few great writers of our time.' □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Prince of Spies: Henri Le Caron

J. A. COLE *Faber* £8.95

The career of Henri Le Caron (or Thomas Beach as he started life) certainly justifies the title 'Prince of Spies'. For nearly 30 years Le Caron was the British Government's most reliable informant on the Irish Republican movement in America, working from a position of trust high in the Fenian ranks. These he penetrated with astonishing ease shortly after the end of the American Civil War, attaching himself to John O'Neill and becoming Lieutenant-Colonel and Acting Adjutant-General of the Irish Republican Army with which O'Neill proposed to invade Canada. This unlikely scheme — in effect to hold the country hostage while negotiations were conducted with London — would have foundered anyway but, throughout the weeks of preparation, Le Caron sent regular and meticulously detailed despatches to the Canadian Chief Commissioner of Police. With characteristic deftness, Le Caron managed to distance himself from the fiasco of O'Neill's military adventure and for the next 15 years concentrated on establishing himself in the Clan-na-Gael (or United Brotherhood), the most revolutionary wing of the republican movement. Reports of meetings and transcripts of circulars accumulated to give London a very full profile of the organisation.

The climax of Le Caron's career came in 1889 when he insisted, against his control's advice, on attending the Parnell Commission as a witness. With the Pigott letters (purporting to prove Parnell committed to unconstitutional and violent methods) revealed as forgeries, the case against the Irish leader was due largely to Le Caron's evidence. Despite attacks on his 'odious profession', Le Caron was satisfied with his performance, justifying himself as 'a patriotic Englishman'.

It is probably not J. A. Cole's fault that we never get beneath the surface of this wooden self-characterisation. Le Caron's own writings offer little insight into his own psychology or into the complexities and pressures of a spy's double life and, while Cole has delved industriously in the other sources available — indeed at times the book loses itself in what he himself refers to as 'the fearsome tangle of Irish revolutionary organisations' — a sense of obdurate anonymity at the heart of the story persists.

Simon Rae

Civil Liberties 1984

ed. PETER WALLINGTON *Martin Robertson* £19.50 & £6.95

Liberty, of course, cannot be taken for granted. Human beings are ready to die for it; competing factions squabble over the title to it. So it not only matters, it needs defining. And *that* this collection of essays, issued to celebrate the NCCL's 50th anniversary, never tries to do. Long on details and short on analysis, it takes its agenda as read. Eleven out of the 19 contributors are lawyers; like the legal profession, the NCCL is committed to liberties rather than liberty.

Liberties are what is left over when parliament and the courts have had their say, defined by precedent and highlighted according to fashion. Trial by jury, for instance, happens to be a fashionable issue and is referred to here more than once. Prosecutions for the possession of hashish, on the other hand, no longer rate issue status and are not mentioned. Mentally ill patients rightly deserve attention. But so do prisoners and they are omitted.

Judging by the contributors to this volume, the NCCL's appeal is restricted to the political Left. Its pre-occupations are those of the egalitarian. The libertarian may not necessarily share the same assumptions, may argue that in a free society people ought to be free — even, for example, to discriminate. There is no discussion here of that possibility. Controversial issues like the closed shop and rights for foetuses are ducked. And the threats to the classic liberal freedoms — expression, association and movement — might have been explored more systematically.

The real danger to Western democracy, short of a nuclear war, derives from a sinister combination of economic collapse and abuse of modern technology. The first forms the background to a short but useful piece on access to the law by Walter Merricks. Duncan Campbell, describing dismissals from the nuclear power industry, and James Michael, writing about privacy and computerised data, touch on the second. Yet the potential scale of the threat fails to emerge. This book is informative, but unenlightening.

Robert Silver

Soviet Psychiatric Abuse

SYDNEY BLOCH & PETER REDDAWAY *Gollancz* £10.95

In 1983 the Soviet Union walked out of the World Psychiatric Association. Its members then, for the first time, passed an overwhelming vote against the use of psychiatry for political purposes. This marked the end of a bitter six-year struggle within the association. This story is carefully documented in *Soviet Psychiatric Abuse*.

Punitive medicine was used by Stalin, but developed by Brezhnev on a larger scale. It was a useful way of getting rid of dissidents without upsetting *détente*. There was no trial, the victims disappeared indefinitely and their views were discredited as those of mad people. The use of drugs such as Sulphazin as a means of torture made psychiatric hospital much more horrific than labour camp and thus a more effective deterrent.

Leading Soviet psychiatrists developed a new theory of medicine to justify this. Criticism of the regime meant inability to adapt to society and was therefore a form of schizophrenia. Dissidents were said to be suffering from 'schizo-dissent', 'a mania for truth-seeking', 'reformist delusions'.

Bloch and Reddaway's book brings out how astonishingly difficult the opponents of Soviet psychiatric abuse found it to convince world opinion of the facts. The members of the unofficial Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes had to collect an absolutely enormous dossier of evidence before anyone would take any notice. The power and prestige of the USSR in international psychiatric circles was immense. Soviet psychiatrists, led by Dr Babayan, defended their position with extreme tenacity. Psychiatrists of other nations had a vested interest in carrying on their co-operation with the Soviet profession and turning a blind eye to what was going on.

Today, something has been achieved. The USSR has been shamed in international circles. But the political use of psychiatry within the Soviet Union continues. Alexei Nikitin, a Soviet miner, recently died after being treated with personality deforming drugs. He had been incarcerated in Talgar Special Psychiatric Hospital for revealing to two Western correspondents the dangerous working conditions of coal-miners in the Ukraine. Dr Anatoly Korchagin, the Kharkov psychiatrist who dared to pronounce him sane, was himself thrown in psychiatric hospital, then given a seven-year jail sentence. A lot more agitation will have to take place both inside and outside the Soviet Union if there is to be any hope of these practices ending.

Olga Semenova

The Memoirs of John Addington Symonds

ed. PHYLLIS GROSSKURTH *Hutchinson* £14.95

Less circumspect, John Addington Symonds would no doubt have ended up in Reading Gaol; but he entrusted his personal memoirs to his friend and confidant H.F. Brown. On Brown's death, they were deposited at the London Library and embargoed. Phyllis Grosskurth has now been able to edit them. Roughly one-fifth of the original text has been excised — passages 'confined mainly to Symonds's execrable poetry and to self-conscious nature descriptions quoted from his own letters'.

What is left is the totally absorbing confessions of Symonds's development as a homosexual, from early childhood when he initially refused to recognise his condition, to his acceptance in adulthood of his true nature. Symonds's collaboration with Havelock Ellis turned his autobiography into Case XVII in *Sexual Inversion*, 1897.

As valuable as the memoirs are for their scientific and, especially, psychological detail, they are important in other ways: for their account of life at Harrow where homosexual affairs and seductions were commonplace, of life at Oxford and at Jowett's Balliol, of London and the wider world where many of Symonds's liaisons took place. Symonds describes the infamous Vaughan episode at Harrow. Vaughan, the headmaster, had corresponded unwisely with one of Symonds's friends, committing his passion for the boy to paper. That friend gave the letters to Symonds. Symonds passed them on to his father, Dr Symonds, who immediately demanded Vaughan's resignation and got it.

The memoirs show Symonds's admirable straightforwardness and honesty in analysing his own nature. He confessed that his object for writing them was 'to know and understand himself'. Now Phyllis Grosskurth enables us to share in that understanding.

Brian Martin

Manners from Heaven

QUENTIN CRISP *Hutchinson* £6.95

More salt-and-vinegar Crispery from the dabhand at aphorisms. The whole book, with its spritely but practised sentences, consists of those quickfire quotes that the author allows to lounge off the end of his tongue in the general direction of a live audience. But you have to hand it to the man: his special brand of offhand eloquence is highly readable. This is not to say that it makes any sort of consistent sense, of course. The art here is to spin out two or three ideas until there is some illusion of substance. What he means by 'manners' is mastering the art of being socially adaptable at the minimum of fuss to oneself. Or, put it another way, turn the other cheek unless it gives you a crick in the neck.

The precepts — now lolling whimsically about under the name of Crisperanto — are so well-polished as to be dazzling. Still, it is rather hard to see how they may ever 'cope with, or outwit, the affronts of racism, sexism, hooliganism', as his laudable foreword hopes his manners may. His principal tactic — telling whoppers of Persil whiteness — may help those knocking round the cocktail circuit. I doubt they'll cut much ice with hijackers. In the meantime, *Manners From Heaven* remains a wittily extended disquisition on the art of having lots of laughs up your sleeve, including the last one. Even when Quentin Crisp is operating at the level of spirited piffle, he is entertaining. And there are always shafts of lightly scathing comment which land much closer to home.

Bill Greenwell

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THEATRE — 1
Paul Allen

Passing the baton

Presenting the 'arbitrary horrors of war', Waseda Sho-Gekijo are the Festival's sensation

Los Angeles Olympic Arts Festival

Three times in 24 hours, when I got to Los Angeles, I heard versions of the song 'Brother Can You Spare a Dime?' Los Angeles is the end of the line for the American Dream, the place where European emigrants collide with Koreans and Chinese coming in the opposite direction and impoverished Mexicans making their way north. Inflation being what it is, beggars were after at least a quarter and preferably all your change.

Inflation has hit the arts too. Nobody has committed more resources than Los Angeles to Baron de Coubertin's generally forgotten ideal that the Olympics should be a feast of artistic as well as athletic culture. The festival is costing 21 million dollars of which only a third will return through the box office. Midland Bank, via its troubled California subsidiary, Crocker, is helping to pay for Royal Opera's visit (which alone costs three and a half million) and the biggest sponsor is the local newspaper, radio and television group Times Mirror, which has stumped up five million.

The Depression song was used only once with anything like seriousness, and that was on a radio programme where it pointed up a surprisingly leftist discussion of contemporary American labour problems. It was used as just another period number in **Olympic Trials**, a slickly-performed and cleverly-written Chandlerish spoof at the Groundlings Theatre where the audience was encouraged to suggest murder clues and the cast responded with considerable inventiveness; the Edinburgh Fringe sees many attempts in this direction but rarely anything so polished.

And it was used with disappointing sentimentality in Arthur Miller's play about the Depression itself, **The American Clock**, produced by the principal Los Angeles repertory-style theatre, the Mark Taper Forum. I call it a play, but Miller is careful not to; he prefers 'a mural for the theatre', and if that smacks of getting in a defence before somebody criticises it for not having much dramatic form I can see why he felt the need.

Much re-written (it was seen, briefly, in New York and at Birmingham Rep in earlier versions) it was partly inspired by Studs Terkel's book *Hard Times,* a collection of interviews adding up to a first-hand popular history of the Depression years. It has one central family, declining from great wealth to poverty, in scenes that recall vintage Miller: in one the father, having got out of his wife's earshot, borrows money for the bus from his son for the first time, and the son's happy grin reveals the way in which the Depression will always be the time when he dislodged his father from some domestic throne. In another the wife is shown going steadily mad because poverty has deprived her of her piano, her theatre tickets and indirectly of intelligent friends.

But much more of the play consists of scenes involving people we never see enough of to become interested in: Iowa farmers threatening to turn into a lynch mob when profiteering money men try to take away their farms; a Southern black remarking that the Depression is really only the whites discovering what life is like for the blacks all the time. These themes promise much, but are never developed.

Early on, one character remarks, of capitalism, something to the effect that: 'In those days we didn't know it was a system. We thought it was nature.' The astonishing thing is that by the end of the evening the Depression itself seems to be regarded as something natural, inevitable, to be got through but in a way quite jolly (compare British attitudes to the Blitz). The old lady next to me affirmed that the play had got things right, that that's how it was, and she was happy as she said it.

The Mark Taper Forum also presented a version of John Keefe's **Wild Oats** adapted by James McClure to a Wild West setting. This was no more than a romp, enjoyable for its energy and ability to engage the audience in the charade. But it left mainstream Los Angeles theatre looking safe, lightweight and a little dull. The city also has over a hundred tiny theatres that operate with the unions' permission without paying union rates. Mostly on or near the edge of Hollywood, they provide a showcase for actors and writers, and a handful have been drawn into the festival.

But even here the product was only moderately adventurous, with the exception of David Mamet's play **Edmond**, directed by Ron Sossi at the Odyssey Theatre. This is a profoundly nihilistic piece charting the journey of one man from domestic ordinariness to a murder rap and prison where he complains of homosexual rape and is told: 'It happens.' Mamet seems to be saying that Edmond's progress is inevitable from the moment he listens to a gipsy who tells him that everybody believes they're special and deserve something better but that he really is and does. His response is to try to get laid but he is inclined to quibble about the price. In a series of short, jolting scenes Mamet makes his plunge into the lower depths, with violence done to Edmond creating a more violent Edmond, seem wholly natural if not really inevitable. It's a play that works at its short length: any longer and it would make its lack of dimension plain.

Most of Los Angeles theatre, though, seemed in awe of the visiting stars. The Royal

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Shakespeare Company's productions of **Much Ado About Nothing** and **Cyrano de Bergerac** were the top draw, and they won full houses, standing ovations and warm critical response for the company, director Terry Hands and leading players Derek Jacobi and Sinead Cusack: 'Shakespeare is a class act,' said the *Los Angeles Times* after watching Ken Bones work on *King Lear* with a crowd of schoolchildren.

Meanwhile Theatre du Soleil presented Shakespeare in French, translated and directed by Ariane Mnouchkine, and much influenced by Eastern ideas of character being revealed by stylised movement. Thus in a traditionally-costumed **Twelfth Night** the always-drunk Toby Belch invariably arrived in a dainty, teetering dance that seemed perilously unlikely to get him across the empty acres of the stage. The use of Indian-style music made 'If music be the food of love' into a (perhaps unintentionally) cheap gag, and the translation turned 'Make me a willow-cabin at your gate' into chic advice from *Homes and Gardens,* while having a woman play Andrew Aguecheek actually removed the sexual ambivalence from the play. But the real problem after four hours was a lack of emotional and moral core: if Malvolio, for instance, doesn't matter to us, then nor does the cruelly extended teasing to which he is subjected.

The festival sensation was the Waseda Sho-Gekijo company from Japan, who ought to be brought to Britain at the earliest opportunity. They presented a version of **The Trojan Women,** transferred to postwar Japan and with added rape, child-murder and open hostility both to the old gods and new materialism. Director Tadashi Suzuki is also deeply committed to stylised movement but subordinates it to content, in this case an anti-war tirade as fierce as war itself. His Hecuba, Kayoko Shiraishi, blazes with a theatrical passion that scorches across language barriers; behind her, iconic figures (death, mostly) disturb with their very stillness; between, soldiers and victims are engaged in precise images of a random reality, the arbitrary horrors of war. An alarming, thrilling evening; and a reminder that 'relevance', that ill-defined theatrical quality, comes in unexpected places. □

ROCK RECORDS
Barney Hoskyns

Sounding off

'IT'S GOOD SPRINGSTEEN,' an indulgent supporter assured me in the tone a drug dealer would use to promote his stash. Perhaps after two years we're entitled to expect more of **Born in the USA** (CBS). Here, as Bruce puts it himself with blithe ingenuousness, are another 12 'boring stories of glory days'. (But then ingenuousness is the secret of his success.)

The same cars, the same oil refineries, the same 'bad desires': as the sentimentality has set, so the sound has hardened with crystalline clarity. The songs are strong, stirring even — 'Dancing In The Dark', 'Downbound Train' — but there's a new sense of looking back, taking stock. 'I'm 35, we've got a boy of our own now,' sings the narrator of 'My Hometown'. There's a feeling that Springsteen is questioning his own faith in rock'n'roll as collective memory. 'We liked the same bands, the same clothes,' he reminisces of an old flame. The response to all pain and strife is still to get on a bus or a train, but Bruce's role as Everyman USA has become a curiously stationary one.

In the Studio couldn't be a more appropriate title for the long-awaited Special AKA album (2-Tone), since Jerry Dammers hasn't come *out* of the studio in two years. Which is precisely why he is important, why he, almost alone, is prepared to stray beyond the 'cult of youth' and work at his art in isolation. Eight of the pieces here (more than a few heard before) are pop music of staggering complexity and intelligence, and it's been a rare pleasure to follow Dammers's development from 'International Jet Set' through 'Ghost Town' to the extraordinary 'War Crimes', a sombre, spectral piece that goes so far beyond the confines of popular music I hesitate to mention it alongside most of pop's dross. If Dammers has retired to the studio, it's paid off in the sheer range of musics he has brought to bear on the personal vision here. From the jubilant pleading of 'Nelson Mandela' to Rhoda Dakar's torching of 'Alcohol' — where Kurt Weill meets 'For The Benefit Of Mr Kite' — Dammers fuses jazz, Latin, funk, African and reggae inflections to construct new worlds of sound. *In the Studio* is a landmark.

The consensus seems to be that Elvis Costello's **Goodbye Cruel World** (F-Beat) is a flop, which isn't quite fair. Still, one can't help noticing that its best moments are the simplest ones: the stately, Beatlish 'Peace In Our Time', the fabulous version of Teacher's Edition's 'I Wanna Be Loved'. The latter's gut-wrenching wail of 'Why must I be so lonely?' makes all Elvis's ensuing erudition — contorted and unfocused as it is — seem redundant. The solemn portraiture of 'Joe Porterhouse' and the unconvincing raunch of 'Sour Milk-Cow Blues' alike sound like filler. Only when he's really struggling with pain — on 'Home Truth', for instance — does something real emerge.

Those other great English popsmiths Chris Difford and Glen Tilbrook also, for the most part, fail on their Tony Visconti-produced **Difford & Tilbrook** (A&M). Besides the superbly soulful 'On My Mind Tonight', it's all a bit blandly freshfaced, although the bizarre Edenic parable 'Apple Tree' sounds like Paul McCartney produced by the Brian Wilson of 'Surf's Up'. In another **Eden** (Blanco Y Negro), two Hull English students called Everything But The Girl dignify their hushed bedsit lamentations with perfect jazz-based arrangements, using a nucleus of personnel from the London ensemble Working Week to craft delights like the heartache samba of 'Each and Every One'. They sound sincere, too, although I can't imagine the mousily melancholic Tracey Thorn taking a bite of Eden's apple.

Degenerates who clean up invariably become bores; Lou Reed is no exception. Three albums on and he's still very happy with his wife and motorbike, and I'm sure we're all very happy for him, too. Now without the skewered guitar of Robert Quine, the born-again Average Guy averages on through **New Sensations** (RCA), another collection of whimsied rocking-chair reflections on life as she is fouled up. Where Reed's insincerity was once an integral part of the anti-culture celebrated by The Velvet Underground, now it just grates.

Someone else who irritates me is Jonathan Richman, whose **Jonathan Sings** (Rough Trade) is a work of similarly egocentric pettiness. This tongue-in-cheek micropop is the most jarringly cute record he's made to date. There's better American music on **The Las Vegas Story** (Animal) by The Gun Club, whose Jeffrey Lee Pierce — a blond and bloated Jim Morrison preaching swamp-punk blues — I couldn't take seriously until a couple of songs from *Miami* struck me as really quite powerful cries of obsession. Pierce is like Nick Cave of The Birthday Party except in tune. I like the way his voice quavers just on the sharp side, and I love the way he can move from an exquisite version of 'My Man's Gone Now' to a wildly flailing rock song like 'Bad America' without forcing the issue.

Recommended: Epic's **American Heartbeat** compilation, for REO Speedwagon's breathtaking hymn of fidelity 'Keep On Loving You'. The remix of Black Uhuru's **Anthem** (Island) by London dubmeister Paul 'Groucho' Smykle, who's given more meat to the beat and added dizzying synth fills. **The Yabby U Collection** on Greensleeves: ten of this righteous veteran's most crisply stern pronouncements on Babylon, including 'Chant Down' and the densely devotional 'Conquering Lion'. (Don't miss Horace Andy's blistering 'Curfew' on Ujama either.) Soulwise, Minneapolitan midget Prince returns with the soundtrack to his forthcoming film **Purple Rain** (Warner Bros.), much of which is the usual overdone fusion of soul croon and heavy metal vamping — a kind of black version of Todd Rundgren's *Wizard, A True Star* — but some of which is superb. 'I Would Die 4 U' should be a huge hit, while the current single 'When Doves Cry' is a radically futuristic ballad, at least as strange as Smokey Robinson's revenge against Culture Club 'And I Don't Love You' (Motown).

On the home front, finally, the jazzified, multi-ethnic Roxy of David Sylvian's **Brilliant Trees** (Virgin) is very seductive, thanks in great part to the presence on several instruments of Holger Czukay. On **Parade** (Chrysalis), Spandau Ballet demonstrate how they are becoming more and more of a mainstream powerpop band, less and less of the proselytising aryan soulboys we'd come to love to loathe. 'Just leave me with the pride / that I worked for / now they've taken the reason away.' This much is true. □

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CLASSICAL RECORDS
Andrew Clements

Accompanying art

EVER SINCE Gerald Moore retired and **Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau** thus lost the accompanist with whom he had recorded all of Schubert's songs for Deutsche Grammophon, he has worked with a number of illustrious pianists. With Christoph Eschenbach he recorded a good deal of Schumann, with Daniel Barenboim Schubert's *Die Winterreise*, while there was a memorable Radio 3 relay a few years ago of the same song cycle with Maurizio Pollini. The most recent alliance, however, has been with Alfred Brendel. The pair appeared together for a Covent Garden celebrity recital two weeks ago and gave an account of *Winterreise* that will have etched itself on the memories of all those fortunate enough to have heard it; already they have made a pair of Schubert discs for Philips, whose quality the Covent Garden appearance only reinforced.

Great pianists are not automatically great accompanists. The clash of egos involved can as often be destructive as it is constructive. Brendel, though, has never been a pianist to interpose himself between the music and the listener, nor to seek to make interpretative points for anything other than totally valid musical reasons. I must confess that he is not always to my taste in recital, but that could have as much to do with the aura of holy writ that surrounds his Festival Hall recitals these days as with the details of his performances. As an accompanist, however, he is quite magical. His playing of the Schubert solo piano music is, of course, peerless but in the spare accompaniments to many of the songs on these two discs he finds a wealth of fascinating detail: a rhythmic figure for once deliberately articulated here, a chromatic passing note given due expressive weight there, while the lean, slightly dry piano sound is a perfect foil to the state of Fischer-Dieskau's voice as it now is.

There is no profit in pretending that the great baritone has the same generosity of burnished tone and unruffled phrasing he had a decade ago. Yet there is never a sense here (and only very rarely in the ROH *Winterreise*) of failing vocal powers diminishing the performance of a song in any way; the approach is perfectly matched to the resources the singer now has at his disposal, every line considered, balanced, inflected. One of the issues includes the whole of the collection of late Schubert songs that has retained its publisher's title of *Schwanengesang* (Philips 6514 383) and the six Heine settings on the second side distil the essence of this creative alliance — Brendel delivers the often frozen chordal accompaniments with a detachment that is extraordinarily potent, while Fischer-Dieskau selects predominantly slow tempi to sustain the mood of each song with great intensity. 'Der Doppelgänger' is the inevitable climax, but in emphasising the singular greatness of this performance I cannot overlook the perfectly conceived accounts of 'Die Stadt' and 'Am Meer' that lead up to it.

That it is the more intense, introspective side of Schubert which shows the partnership to best advantage is demonstrated by the mixed recital of songs released as Philips 6514 384. If a criticism of any of them could be made it is that Brendel is apt to detect unease and uncertainty under the most innocent Schubertian surface, and hence to replace freshness with taut angularity. In the famous 'Der Wanderer', though, the mood is fearsomely projected while Schiller's 'Gruppe aus dem Tartarus' takes years off Fischer-Deiskau's voice: here is the old power undimmed, while the monochrome studies of Goethe's three 'Gesänge des Harfners' are able to rely for sustenance on perfectly even tone and peerless phrasing. I cannot recommend either record too highly.

Equal enthusiasm, too, though more briefly expressed, for the second instalment of **Robyn Archer**'s exploration of Brecht in song (EMI EL27 0049 1) with the London Sinfonietta conducted by Dominic Muldowney. Settings by Hanns Eisler make up the bulk of the disc, with a leavening of Weill (including the 'Cannon Song' and 'Mack the Knife' from *Threepenny Opera*) and, to end, two of Muldowney's own fine set of *Theatre Songs*. Archer sings with a trenchant attention to the meaning of every syllable; there are typically exemplary sleeve notes from John Willett. The release is superb in every respect. □

billboard

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THEATRE — 2
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Modern manners

Progress
DOUG LUCIE *Bush*
The Common Pursuit
SIMON GRAY *Lyric*
Seachange
STEPHEN LOWE *Riverside*
Anton Chekhov
MICHAEL PENNINGTON *Cottesloe*

It would take a tough person not to cringe occasionally in front of **Progress**, Doug Lucie's biting picture of contemporary mores. A wide array of types are assembled in this well-heeled North London flat: Will, Channel 4 researcher, nobly knocking together spare ribs in black bean sauce in order to liberate his wife. Ronee, coordinator of a South London community arts centre, discovering the delights of a lesbian friendship. Martin, Ollie and Bruce, members of Will's consciousness-raising men's group who meet every Tuesday to examine their attitudes in a context they fervently hope will avoid 'traditional hierarchical structures'. The only person not impressed by the high moral tone is the tabloid journalist, Mark, they've unfortunately inherited with the flat. 'Trendy lefties — about as much fun as a plane crash,' he mutters gloomily as he goes up to his attic. 'Leave your window open, darling,' he calls automatically in passing to anyone female. They shudder delicately at his uncouth sexism.

For much of the first half, Lucie puts a bead on absurdities and idiocies and brings them neatly down in flames — the pornography study group, with examples stashed away in a brown Sainsbury's carrier; the discussions on terminology. 'I wanted to try something a bit radical — sorry you couldn't handle it,' says Will loftily when his wife refuses to share her lover. Until the gears change, as they do almost imperceptibly, it's a cosy in-house joke. But Lucie's view is not so comfortable.

If trendiness is a game for his solemn radicals, it is a game with real-life penalties. Who the winners are it is hard to say. Not silly Ollie (David Bamber) clinging desperately to the far from keen Martin (Kevin Elyot). Not Will, played by Gregory Floy with a clean-cut parody of Christ-like compassion revealing at the end nothing but contempt for the unfortunates he collects. Not the fearfully stammering Bruce (Struan Rodger), discovered to be another sort of predator, or battered Ange (Sharon Maiden), rejecting her violent working-class husband for the 'niceness' of middle-class life. This bleakly misanthropic play turns out at the end to be inhabited largely by knaves and fools. It is beautifully acted and crisply directed by David Hayman in a set, by Geoff Rose, of great credibility. An evening of much wit, great energy and little compassion.

If Lucie appears to dislike most of his characters, Simon Gray appears — with even less reason — to go the other way. The protagonists of **The Common Pursuit** are, when we first meet them, undergraduate friends at Cambridge. For this is that trusty formula — the *sic transit gloria* play. All five men are convinced that the world will prove their oyster. (The one woman has less extreme aspirations, but then women are somewhat ancillary in this world of male-bonding.) Stuart (Nicholas Le Prevost) will run his literary magazine. Martin (Ian Ogilvy) will run the business side. Humphry (Clive Francis) will be a great philosopher and Nick (Robert East) will conquer the media.

As time moves on and distances them from those golden Sixties days, their dreams become tarnished. Of course they achieve worldly prosperity — none of them starves, though the magazine is clearly rather slim. But Stuart's marriage is barren and he loses his wife. Clever Peter (Simon Williams) spends all his energies in furtive affairs. And Humphry, supposedly the best of them all, chooses death at the hands of a rough-trade pick-up.

Harold Pinter's direction brings out a fair amount of shading in the text, but it still cannot give it the significance at which the piece aims. There is no getting away from the fact that we are expected to believe in the specialness of a group of people who seem to have nothing but a certain glib and mannered wit to recommend them. Performances are of a high standard. However, a collection of cameos can never make anything more than a small exhibition.

STEPHEN Lowe's new play, **Seachange**, shares nothing with Simon Gray. While Gray is controlled, Lowe is hugely eclectic. Where Gray offers conclusions, Lowe offers processes. His play takes place on an imaginary voyage of the Aegean; early on, the equation is made with the medieval Ship of Fools. On board, as the Falklands war looms in the wings, are representatives of other conflicts — Ireland, Cyprus, Nazi Germany — as well as a left-wing playwright, the ghost of his soldier grandfather, a possessed young girl (significantly called Cass-andra) and a Christian searching for Philadelphia or the city of brotherly love. As will be apparent, Lowe has, so to speak, taken far too much on board, and the result is a play that is only half coherent (and occasionally pretentious). What is lacking is a sense of inner clarity that will encourage audiences to reach for a meaning.

Clarity is the supreme virtue of Michael Pennington's engaging re-creation of **Anton Chekhov.** The acting area, beautifully lit by Paul McLeish, is dreamlike: his desk, dustsheet-covered chairs, open trunks and the steady tick of an old-fashioned clock. Moving around it Pennington weaves together reminiscences, diaries and snatches of stories, looking back on a life he sees with some pride as 'an accomplished composition' on the brink of his death.

It is an evening that increasingly grips the attention. Pennington brings out a quiet visionary quality embodied in sharp almost painterly images — a woman kneading sunlight into her dough, the poignant beauty of a girl never seen again, the burning stubble when he escapes death in Siberia. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Shades of dusk

IN KEVIN BILLINGTON'S **Reflections** (C4) a grave historian takes the lodge of a crumbling Irish manor for the summer, in order to finish his book on Isaac Newton. We see him crossing the bridge over the moat and something about the direction persuades us it is a metaphorical bridge he is crossing: 'I have been a boy playing on the seashore, while the great ocean of truth lay before me . . .' Over there is a little boy with a bow and arrow and before long Masters is falling in love with the lady of the manor, Charlotte, though it is her niece Ottilie he makes love to.

The film is long and episodic, building its images into retrospective parallels. Two ratters like Blind Pughs plod round the collapsing estate, which is lurching on as a nursery farm. 'We shall have to sell up sooner or later,' says Charlotte's live-in nuseryman who is dying of cancer.

Our visiting professor, viewing the strange new world from our angle, fails to grasp exactly what is going on or what is happening to him in this disenchanted island he has stumbled upon. It is the past, of course: that other country, Ireland in fact, where people are still straight with their emotions. He is cruel to the young girl he sleeps with, who loves him, ignored by the older woman who loves only her dying Michael and their fading estate.

Kevin Billington has used this subtle film to say everything he needs to about the wider issues of Ireland. The social conflicts are brilliantly sketched, as at the little boy's birthday tea when everyone present seems to embrace their doom with a vengeance. 'Would you like to fortify that stewed water you're drinking?' Michael asks the visitor, wielding what might be an Irish hockey stick. 'What shall we drink to?' 'Victory!' says his coarse sister. 'There's nothing wrong with this country that a good civil war won't cure.' Or a cancer, for that matter, we think, for death is everywhere in this Chekhovian orchard. What we are seeing here is the invasion of the Celtic Twilight by Sir Isaac Newton's latterday representative. 'Before him,' says his prophet, 'it was all magic and sweaty dreams . . . He put mathematical rigour into it.' Rigor mortis, that is.

By the end of the story our hero has given up his book. 'I absolve you,' he tells the girl who loves him, 'I tell you I've abandoned my book, so you . . . you are set free, you silly girl. Don't you understand?' Has he burnt his bridges? we wonder. 'It wasn't the fire which drove Newton mad,' he says, telling Ottilie of the seven years of work that went up in flames when his little dog upset a candle, 'but the realisation of how little it mattered.' Masters is England, the bastard. He can always go home and leave them all to it. But it may be too late for the dying Michael, careering drunkenly in his car like

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Ireland. The film has a hundred undertones of the famous love-hate relationship: Masters's cold and distant exploitation, Ottilie's romantic delusions, 'spilt religion' as someone called it. 'All this love,' says Masters, 'I'm weary of it. See that cloud. That's love.' 'At least I'm not a fucking phoney like you,' replies the girl, and she means what she says: 'Look at me when we're doing it. I want you to see me.'

Masters makes a pass at the older woman as her man lies dying drunkenly on the floor at their feet. She hardly notices through her sadness. At the end of the film he crosses the little bridge again, back into the real world, back into Newtonian 'England' where logic and coldness reign at the end of summer. But he'll be back, you feel, for Ireland is the better half of all of us, if we could only give up our books on Newton and learn to love the one who loves us. 'The great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.' Or, as Yeats put it, 'The battle is mythological, a type of cold and winter doing battle with the summer, or of death battling with life.'

Donald Campbell's **The Old Master** (ITV) was a drama wreathed in another kind of Celtic Twilight, that of Scots laird Sir John on his hundredth birthday. 'I've done it again,' he exults on his birthday morning, 'made it to another day.' Perky music serenades him on the soundtrack as the long-awaited Telegram arrives. He may be a hundred but this old boy looks and acts about 60. First thing, he lopes off for a miles-long hike with Fiona. We gather he'll be some time. 'You know perfectly well Uncle Eddie (his son, 20 years his senior) that time has no meaning for him when he's with her.'

Their walk, up hill and down dale, exhausted me, but seemed to cheer up the old boy who was sprightlier than ever and sat down to answer the centenarian's statutory four sacks of mail. He even had wind left over for a row with his returning actor grandson who has the temerity to show up in jeans. Is this man human, or is he a representative personage also? I'm afraid so. Before long he's off on his second walk to visit all his friends and relations in their graves. They must have lain down gratefully.

Contrary to expectations the prodigal is prepared to shoulder his inheritance, so all is well. 'I'm telling you boy, you'll not be short of battles,' Sir John warns him, 'what with the oil men and the Army'. But Sonny Jim isn't afraid: 'I'm tired of running away, Grandfather. Too many people have run away. Maybe that's what's wrong with the Highlands.' 'You're right, boy, we've got to fight for survival.' Fiona is around, too, of course, so he tells her, 'I'm tired of being a stranger, Fiona.' Unfortunately this doesn't fit in with Fiona's plans to emigrate, but they don't let that spoil the shindig that evening, which is a riot past belief, with our centenarian stripping the willow, getting pissed and rising early the next morning with his usual, 'I've done it again. Lived another day!'

On this evidence, Scotland is a healthier if duller place than Ireland. Which is what we always suspected. □

John Coleman is unwell. We apologise for the consequent absence of the film column; it will be back next week written pro tem by guest critics.

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2830 Set by Henry Hetherington

Compers will of course be familiar with the Ruthless Rhyme; but, to refresh your memory, here's Harry Graham's on his Aunt Eliza:

In the drinking well
Which the plumber built her
Aunt Eliza fell —
We must buy a filter.

New ones, please, featuring a famous, living personality. Max three Rhymes by 27 July.

No 2827 Set by Maud Gracechurch

Alice in Thatcherlands on the subject of elections and ballots.

Report by Ernest Oswald fflap

What *wicked* little cerebra you have! My old eyes are positively moist with chortling — indeed, at one point, Diana Dact (a *splendid* gal, but not unathletic) was forced to give me a resuscitative tap between the scapulae. My man of medicine assures me that the bruising will fade. So, then, twelve pounds each to the winners and bless you, all, just for *being* there.

'It's really perfectly simple,' said the Blue Queen. 'At a general election, everybody can vote except minors, peers and lunatics. So when we have our little local difficulties, it's only fair that these minorities should get their turn. That's why I want the minors to vote now.'

'But isn't that a different kind of miner?' said Alice.

'In a democracy,' said the Blue Queen grandly, 'all minors are treated equally.'

Alice felt dreadfully puzzled, but went on. 'And the Cheltenham civil servants — was that democracy, too?'

'That's when the lunatics got their vote,' said the Blue Queen. 'As it happens, they're all in my cabinet.'

'What about the GLC then?' asked Alice.

'That's where the peers came in,' said the Blue Queen triumphantly.

NOEL PETTY

Thatcher: Look, when you've as strong a mind as I have you'll *enjoy* creating insoluble problems. ▷

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FIRST PERSON

Jeremy Lewis

Art attack

QUITE APART from — on the whole — enjoying the noise they make, I have been a stout defender of street musicians since I was about ten, when a tightly corseted lady in a fox fur reprimanded me in the Gloucester Road for giving sixpence to a clarinettist with a throbbing carbuncular nose, who was shuffling along the gutter making life that little bit brighter for the shoppers hurrying into Waitrose. 'If you knew what men like that did with the money you give them, you wouldn't be so ready to waste it on them,' she declared, her angry frown hinting at sinister orgies in distant doss houses.

Such glum souls — and those who struggle to enforce our killjoy bylaws about the playing of music in public places — must find themselves sadly overstretched these days, for the last year or two has seen an extraordinary proliferation of street musicians honking and tooting on bridges and in underground stations, ranging from melancholy down-and-outs wheezing tunelessly into mouth organs, empty tobacco tins outstretched, to youthful, scrubbed-looking string quartets serenading the commuters with impeccable renderings of Bach and Boccherini.

Many of the tramp-like musicians, in their greasy gaberdines and trousers of a truly unmentionable aspect, must be the unhappy victims of unemployment and the recession. Whether their younger and more professional colleagues are music students trying their hands at public performance and earning a pound or two on the side, or recent graduates unable to find full-time work, I have yet to find out; either way, I find them oddly disturbing, grateful as I am for the wonderful sounds with which they enliven one's arrival at Charing Cross.

Ever since I lived in Oxford and watched the long lines of small children puffing up the Banbury Road with their violin cases in their hands — or, occasionally, some enormous horned instrument strapped to the back, giving the long-suffering bearer the look of a snail — and listened to the terrible screeches from the house next door and wondered at the pathetic anxiety with which earnest, high-minded parents strove to detect the first elusive intimations of genius, or even talent, in the raucous raspings of their offspring, I have been haunted by the notion of my daughters growing up in a world staffed entirely by second-rate violinists. This vision of an amiable but impractical Utopia, in which the air is alive with sounds and sweet (and not so sweet) airs, but the nuts and bolts of ordinary life — so wearisome to the exalted spirit — are unwisely unattended to, is encouraged by schools of a modern cast of mind: great emphasis is placed by kindly teachers on the school orchestra and the high incidence of recorder players among the pupils, leaving the crustier parent ungratefully wishing that equal enthusiasm and energy were devoted to education of a more conventional, if less 'creative' kind. Why is it, I find myself frequently wondering in the most brutal and philistine manner, that middle-class parents in particular seem so unnaturally anxious that, whatever else may befall them, even the most bored and untalented of children should be dragooned into playing a stringed instrument of an unfacetious kind? (No ukeleles, *please*!)

The commonsensical answer is that these far-sighted folk are providing their sons and daughters with a skill that will afford them — if not those in the immediate vicinity — with a good deal of harmless pleasure for years to come; but I suspect that neither commonsense nor simple pleasure would cut much ice with the serious-minded parent of today, who is much more likely to think of a musical education as a Good Thing to be endured, like roughage or regular exercise.

The philosophically-minded investigator might do worse than to turn to our old friend, the Spirit of the Age. In our irreligious, post-imperial times, that daunting abstraction known as 'the Arts' has, for some of us at least, filled the void left by both the Divine and the White Man's Burden. Young men who, 50 years ago, would have settled down to vicarage life or to governing some obscure slice of jungle, devote their energies to the airless wastes of Arts Admin.; able bodied individuals, purpose-built for knee-length shorts, while away the long hours writing theses on novelists about whom far too much has been written already; the Critics — the high priests and the theologians *de nos jours* — busy themselves, profitably and self-importantly, in shrouding the luckless objects of their veneration in clouds of hot air and, through them, we the uninitiated approach the Arts in a spirit of baffled trepidation rather than with the passionate relish (or disdain) one might properly expect.

Even the most jocular sportsman, pining to watch the Test on telly or get down to the latest Desmond Bagley (shame!), has learned to conceal his yawns and assume an expression of solemn piety at the merest mention of the Arts, similar to that affected by his ancestors when the vicar dropped by for a chat. In an elevated world in which culture is a substitute religion, the violin-playing child is, perhaps, an outward and visible sign of grace; and, if all else fails, there's a living to be made on the tube or on Hungerford Bridge. □

continued from p. 35

Alice: But if they're insoluble you can't solve them can you?
Thatcher: Of course I can.
Alice: How?
Thatcher: By being resoluter and resoluter.
Alice: But why must the miners vote and not Londoners?
Thatcher: Because the poor miners haven't *had* a vote, silly. I'll give them one then they'll vote for me. Rejoice!
Alice: Won't the Londoners vote for you?
Thatcher: Stupid. Look, they've already *had* a vote. You can't *keep on* having elections. I *never* change my mind, *never, never never*!
Alice: Why not?
Thatcher: I'm so resolute. You can tell by the way I walk. I just keep on and on.
Alice: Don't you bump into things?
Thatcher: I haven't noticed.
Alice: Have you been to the doctor?

GERRY HAMILL

'The British people are sound enough at the grass roots,' said the Blue Queen.

'Is that what's meant by lawn order?' enquired Alice politely.

'Nonsense, child. I'm talking about democracy.'

'Democracy means government by the people. I learnt that at school,' said Alice.

'Democracy means government by demos,' the Blue Queen retorted. 'Marchers with banners.'

'Shouldn't people be allowed to vote, then?'

'That depends,' replied the Blue Queen.

'On what?'

The Blue Queen smiled. 'On me, of course. Right-minded people should vote. Not others — the lower orders — servants.'

'Not even if they're Civil Servants?' interrupted Alice.

'Good heavens no,' shouted the Blue Queen. 'They're a security risk.' And she vanished into No 10, leaving only a whiff of Chanel No MI5 behind.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

'It's perfectly plain,' said the Mad Thatcher, 'the universal franchise and the secret ballot are two cornerstones of democracy but,' and here her good eye rolled horribly, 'but the third cornerstone is an informed and right-minded electorate.'

Alice began to trace a triangle in the sand. 'Silly child!' the Thatcher continued. 'There must be four cornerstones and the fourth is a reliable police. When the electors are ignorant and stupid and pig-headed and. . .'

'Left-minded?' interjected Alice.

'What a clever girl you are. Left-minded. They can't be trusted and we have to decide for them.'

JOHN STANLEY

'You see,' said the Queen, 'they handle secrets so everything they do must be in the open and under control. That's what democracy is: government of the people by the peep-hole.'

'Then why must the miners vote in secret?' asked Alice.

'Ah! That's different. Miners can be swayed by the majority. If they vote in secret they won't know what the majority is so they can't be swayed. Then what most of them really want is what counts.'

'And not the majority? That sounds like saying that because they work underground they must be ground under.'

'Precisely,' said the Queen.

N. J. WARBURTON

'The rule is when it's right you don't have a ballot and when it's left you do,' said the Queen.

'What's right?' Alice asked.

'What I say.'

'That's a funny definition.'

'I don't see anything funny about it at all. It all depends where you're standing, of course.'

'I think I see,' said Alice.

'Don't think!' said the Queen. 'That's unpatriotic.'

'What is.

'Being wet,' said the Queen.

'That's another funny definition,' Alice said. 'What's wet?'

'Pym's number one for a start.'

'What you're saying is wet's whatever you decide,' said Alice.

'That's a very wet remark,' said the Queen in a furious passion and went stamping about and shouting, 'Falklands! So there!' at the top of her voice.

T. GRIFFITHS

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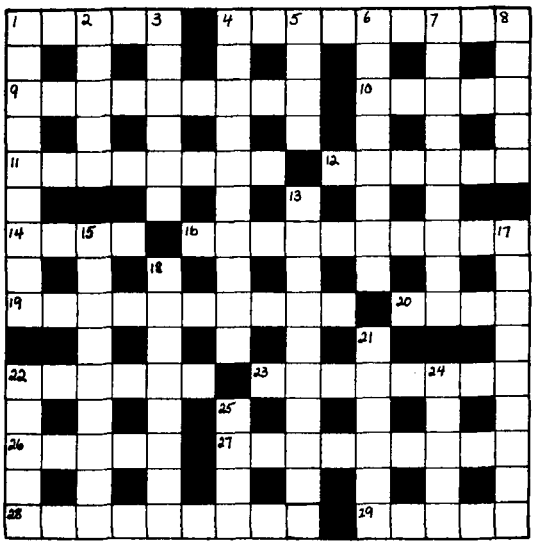
Weekend Crossword 1446

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1446, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 24 July.



Name _____

Address _____

_____

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ACROSS

1. Dress with central decoration (5)
4. City which makes one a cad to mother (9)
9. One duck or two with a second included in goose (9)
10. Shut up and stopped leaving out the east (5)
11. Interfered with a central unit of currency (8)
12. Shocks with pointless challenges (6)
14. Chief for a time without a capital (4)
16. Where a child is something hot (10)
19. Making out there is a record making money in sound (10)
20. Look back and practise conservation (4)
22. An unexpected event in Buchan celebrated by critics (6)
23. Grace says it's mother who does the chores (8)
26. Heath makes one care madly (5)
27. Beheaded criminal punished and possibly put on the rack (9)
28. In Carter's place an insect discovers weeds (9)
29. Clothed although ready for bed (5)

DOWN

1. Chiefly relied on for making a thing hard (9)
2. Means of cleaning second-class accommodation (5)
3. Harshly reviews things written on (6)
4. Diversion for woman in socialist circle (3,7)
5. It is wrong to hurry up (4)
6. Mass epic provides way of ignoring realities (8)
7. Make a bad match and cause a girl's father to lose his temper (9)
8. Ancient king found in a pyramid astride his horse (5)
13. Cannot his replacement fill one of these posts? (10)
15. This place would make a change from Corsica if there were no gratitude (5,4)
17. Break up a paddle when clapped (9)
18. Shopkeeper in the French sea-song (8)
21. Clever although a born tory? (6)
22. A bargain if caught with a lot (5)
24. Lecherous person as butterfly (5)
25. House looking in a certain direction over the main road (4)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1445

L	O	S	E	F	A	C	E	■	A	B	A	S	E	S
E	■	L	■	R	■	H	■	O	■	A	■	T	■	A
G	L	O	B	E	■	A	M	P	E	R	S	A	N	D
A	■	P	■	T	■	P	■	E	■	S	■	I	■	D
C	R	E	S	S	E	T	■	N	A	T	U	R	A	L
Y	■	A	■	A	■	E	■	T	■	O	■	■	■	E
■	D	R	A	W	E	R	S	O	F	W	A	T	E	R
A	■	M	■	■	■	H	■	U	■	■	■	E	■	S
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D	■	■	■	O	■	A	■	N	■	R	■	N	■	S
E	X	P	O	S	E	D	■	A	P	O	G	E	A	N
N	■	A	■	E	■	I	■	M	■	L	■	S	■	O
D	I	L	I	G	E	N	C	E	■	L	A	S	S	O
U	■	E	■	A	■	G	■	N	■	O	■	E	■	P
M	A	R	T	Y	R	■	S	T	O	P	P	E	R	S

Prizewinners to 1445

Gordon Ellis (Bristol)
Monique Fontaine (Seraing, Belgium)
Jack Shaw (Chatham)

★ Classified Ads ★ Phone 01-251 5487 ★

APPOINTMENTS

RESEARCH AND MONITORING OF POLICE EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING GROUP (RAMPET)

New organisation requires 2 workers for one year project to monitor and report upon policing developments in surveillance and public order equipment and training.

For application write:
RAMPET,
c/o 24 Huddleston Road,
London N7.

NURSE NEEDED

to work in a new medical centre in North Sheffield. Job will mainly be preventative care and will include working in well woman clinic, helping with group work, organising hypertension and diabetic clinics and using disease and age/sex registers.

Salary negotiable — full or part-time.

Apply: **Paul Redgrave,**
363 Halifax Road,
Sheffield, S2 1AF.
(0742) 322055.

GROUP SERVICES SECTION

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (AP III)

£7,404 — £8,154

TYPIST/CLERICAL ASSISTANT (GS 1/2)

£2,703 — £5,493

Edinburgh District Council is an authority which believes that local services play an essential role in people's lives. During the next few years, our policies will be based on three major principles, namely:
(i) To protect and improve our services;
(ii) To protect and improve local democracy;
(iii) To do all in our power to save and create jobs.
Following a recent Council decision, a Group Services Section has been established to provide support to the Secretaries of the Party Groups on the District Council.
The Labour Group are now seeking applications for the above posts.
The Administrative Assistant (Ref LG.1) will be expected to demonstrate a high standard of administrative skills and typing abilities, while shorthand qualifications would be advantageous. In addition, applicants should possess a degree of insight into the workings of local government, and a basic understanding of the processes involved.
The Typist/Clerical Assistant (Ref LG.2) will be required to deal with a range of work including correspondence, speeches, and reports. Good shorthand skills, and a minimum typing speed of 45 w.p.m. would be preferred for this post.
Both posts will require an ability to relate to local organisations, trade unions, pensioners' groups and other similar relevant bodies.
Application forms can be obtained by writing to the Director of Administration, City of Edinburgh District Council, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ or telephoning 031-225-2424 ext 5151 or 5111 and quoting the job reference; for more information on the jobs, contact ext 5070. The closing date is 27 July 1984.

City of Edinburgh

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WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

RESEARCH ASSISTANT AND PERSONAL ASSISTANT

£7,191 — £9,660 Scale 5 — SO1

This is a newly created and interesting position for a young and enthusiastic person to work as a Research Assistant and Personal Assistant to the Leader of the Council and, as appropriate, to Chairpersons of Committees of the Council.

Wolverhampton is a progressive Metropolitan Borough Council employing approximately 15,000 persons and the person appointed will be appropriately qualified with considerable administrative and analytical experience preferably, in a large organisation and will have the personality to work under pressure and with people at all levels.

Commencing salary will be determined in accordance with qualifications and experience and the candidate's suitability for the requirements of the post.

Application forms and job description are obtainable from **Controller of Personnel and Management Services, Wolverhampton Borough Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1RG**

Closing date: 3 August 1984

Wolverhampton Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community, irrespective of an individual's sex, ethnic origin or colour and from people with disabilities who have the necessary attributes to do the job.

WOLVERHAMPTON centre of progress

WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PRINCIPAL OFFICER AND POLICY CO-ORDINATOR

£24,000 — £26,000 p.a.

Applications are invited for this post of Principal Officer to the Council following the retirement of the present Chief Executive and Town Clerk, Mr Kenneth Williams LL.B.

Wolverhampton is a progressive Metropolitan Borough with a population of 255,000 and the successful applicant will

i) **have experience of management and policy co-ordination at a senior level, not necessarily in local government, but the successful candidate must have a detailed knowledge of its structure and functions across a wide range of disciplines;**

ii) **have a background and record of developing policies to combat social and economic decline now typical of contemporary urban areas;**

iii) **be committed to working towards the furtherance of equal opportunities and living in a multi-cultural, multi-racial society and**

iv) **the person appointed will have a strong commitment to democratic local government.**

As Chairman of the Chief Officers' Management team, the Principal Officer will be responsible for co-ordinating the whole work of the Council, advising on matters of policy, and for the efficient and effective implementation of the Council's policies and programmes. There will be a small support group but the post is free from specific departmental responsibilities.

Applicants, who may be from any professional background, should have the senior management experience, drive and imagination to provide the leadership required at a time when the town is facing economic and social challenge.

Write or ring for application form and further particulars to Controller of Personnel, Wolverhampton Borough Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1RG. (Wolverhampton 27811 Ext 2106). Closing date 2 August 1984.

Wolverhampton Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community, irrespective of an individual's sex, ethnic origin or colour and from people with disabilities who have the necessary attributes to do the job.

WOLVERHAMPTON centre of progress

WEST YORKSHIRE AREA NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS

AREA SECRETARY

West Yorkshire Area National Union of Students is an organisation of Student Unions in West Yorkshire. Our work involves union development, campaigning and casework.

We are looking for someone with typing and office skills to assist the area executive in their work. Duties include welfare casework and administration. Applicants should have the flexibility and commitment that work for a campaigning organisation requires.

Details from: **The Area Convenor, West Yorkshire Area NUS, 155 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds LS2 3ED, West Yorkshire.**

An Equal Opportunity Employer

THE LABOUR PARTY

require

SALES AND MARKETING OFFICER

to head a new sales and marketing operation arising from a recent review of Head Office. The post-holder will be expected to develop and introduce new products and services for constituency Labour Parties, Party members and supporters, to advise on a new marketing approach for Party publications and to improve the sales performance of the Party.

He/she will be responsible for managing both new and existing services and for existing literature sales/bookshop staff. He/she will report to the Director of Publicity but will work closely with the newly appointed National Fund Raiser. All candidates interviewed will be expected to prepare a development prospectus.

Candidates will be required to have appropriate qualifications and a proven record of experience and achievement in sales and marketing. They must also be able to lead a team of staff and to exercise considerable initiative while understanding the overall political context of their work.

Salary range: **£10,980 — £13,155** p.a. (under review) depending on appropriate experience in a similar capacity.

Application forms, conditions of employment and further details of the post are available from **the Administrative and Personnel Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London, SE17 1JT** (tel. 01-703 0833) and should be returned by Friday, **20 July 1984.** It is intended to interview the shortlisted applicants on **31 July 1984.**

The Labour Party is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Education

District Youth and Community Education Officer

Soulbury Senior Range 3 - 7 (£12,069 - £13,497)

Derbyshire is expanding its Youth and Community Service budget by 30% to meet the challenge of the post YTS generation in a multicultural society. It wants energetic, imaginative and experienced youth workers as part of its District Youth Officer management team.

There are vacancies for Youth and Community Education Officers to be responsible for the services in a District Council area of the County.

For further particulars, please write to the Director of Education, County Offices, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG or ring Matlock (0629) 3411 extension 6471. Closing date: 27 July 1984.

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

DERBYSHIRE County Council

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UNITED KINGDOM IMMIGRANTS ADVISORY SERVICE
applications are invited for the posts of

DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR (LEGAL)

Both posts are located at the Head Office of the Service in London. UKIAS is an independent voluntary organisation formed in 1970 to provide a national legal advice and representation service on immigration. It receives a grant-in-aid from the Home Office and financial assistance from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The Director will take overall charge of UKIAS, the Deputy Director (Legal) will take day to day responsibility for staff training, legal advice and information, and the "quality control" of case-work and advocacy.

For both posts experience and knowledge of immigration law and counselling are highly desirable. Legal qualifications are essential for the post of Deputy Director (Legal) while for the post of Director experience in public information work and proven ability to handle external relations (e.g. with government departments, member organisations and the mass media) is required.

Starting salaries will reflect qualifications and experience. Scale for Deputy Director (Legal) from £10,242 to £12,738 per annum and for Director £15,357 to £18,267 per annum (plus Inner London Weighting Allowance of £1,191 in both cases).

For further details and application forms, returnable by **31 July 1984** please contact:

**Teresa Perchard, UKIAS, PO Box 132, London, WC2E 7LR.
Tel. 01-240 5176/77/78/79**

EXCITING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

CITY OF MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Economic and Employment Unit

CO-ORDINATOR

A36,435 Dollars per annum

The City of Melbourne is a Local Government Authority which incorporates the Central Business District and has 2,700 employees.

The brief of the unit includes:

1. The development of innovative proposals for new services and job opportunities within the municipality.
2. Research and support for new initiatives in long term employment opportunities and for community based job creation.
3. Co-ordination of Council's involvement in Commonwealth and State Government job creation schemes including training.

The Co-ordinator will head up a small staff team and implement this brief. The Co-ordinator reports to an advisory committee that has representation for Government, Unions, Business and Community Groups.

Applicants should have:

— Appropriate tertiary qualifications.

— The ability to co-ordinate a team of skilled people and act as a leader.

— Demonstrated ability to work effectively with a cross section of Union, Business and Community Groups.

This important appointment will initially be for two years with a review after two years in relation to a third year of employment.

Applications which must include a comprehensive work history, close with The Manager — Personnel, Town Hall, Melbourne, Australia 3000, on Monday 30 July 1984.

OV SELECTION CATERS for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

THERAPY

EXPERIENCED, CARING PSYCHOTHERAPISTS. 01-794 6810, 01-586 4109, 01-883 5418.

BOOKS

MODERN FIRST EDITIONS — Summer Catalogue. Charlotte Robinson, 35 Gt Pulteney St, London W1. 01-437 3683. Catalogue 7, Modern Firsts, Children's & Illustrated Books, Half Price Sale Section, More Bargains in the shop Weekdays 11-6pm.

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822.

LISTINGS

THURS 12 JULY

BRIXTON 'Women in Nicaragua' — talk and slide show by recently returned members of Women's Peace Delegation to Nicaragua. 7.30pm South London Women's Centre, 55 Acre Lane, (1 min Brixton tube). Women only. Wheelchair access. **Details: 01-359 8982.**

COVENT GARDEN Defend the right to demonstrate against apartheid. Picket Bow Street Magistrates Court. Andy Higginbottom, Sec. of City AA is in court. **Org. City of London Anti-Apartheid Grp. BMCity AA, London, WC1N 3XX.**

FRI 13 JULY

LONDON Defend the right to demonstrate outside South African Embassy. Police Ban Picket. Come and join us to fight the ban. 5.15pm Assemble Duncannon St. **Details: City Anti Apartheid Grp 01-837 6050.**

LONDON Gay Humanist Group open meeting — discn/social. 7.30pm Library, Conway Hall Humanist Centre, Red Lion Sq, WC2. All welcome. **Details: Gay Humanist Grp, National Office, 34 Spring Lane, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2HB. 0926 58450.**

HACKNEY Benefit concert for the miners' wives. 7.30pm Stoke Newington Assembly Halls, Stoke Newington Church St, N16. Film 'Salt of the Earth', Hi Jinx playing. Women only. Adm. £3/£1.50 unwaged. **Org. Hackney Greenham Women Support Groups.**

SAT 14 JULY

CAMDEN 'European Socialism after the Elections' 2-4.30pm Camden Labour Club (Upstairs rm.), 4 Carol St, NW1. **Org. International Foundation Left Europe, UK Group. 05827 5399.**

MON 16 JULY

LONDON Denis Diderot — meeting to commemorate the 200 anniversary of the death of this great French Philosopher. 7pm The Library, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. Spkrs. Harold Blackham, Nicolas Walter. Readings by John White. All welcome. **Org. The National Secular Society.**

TUES 17 JULY

LONDON 'The Liberation of Men' Spkr. Rose Hacker. 7pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. Adm. 75p/free unwaged. **Org. Woman-Man Relationship Grp. of the Progressive League.**

CAMDEN 'Liverpool — the lessons for the future' Public meeting on government's attack on local democracy. Spkrs. Tony Byrne, Liverpool City Cllr and others from Camden. 8pm Camden Town Hall, Euston Road, NW1.

LONDON 'Carry Greenham Home' film by Biban Kidron followed by discn. about women in the peace movement with the film maker. Adm. 50p/£1 non-membs. 6.30pm Mary Ward Centre, Queen's St. WC1. **Org. BAND (Book Action for Nuclear Disarmament)**

WED 18 JULY

LONDON Rally: 'Defend the right to picket outside the South African Embassy. 7pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. Spkrs. David Kitson, recently released after 20 years as a political prisoner in South Africa. Singing, displays, exhibitions. **Org. South African Embassy Picket Campaign 1984, C/O BM City AA, WC1N 3XX.**

THURS 19 JULY

MANCHESTER 'Ireland, the key to British Revolution?' Spkr David Reed. 7.30pm Longsight Library, Stockport Rd. **Org. Manchester RCG, Box 38, 434 Corn Exchange Blds., Hanging Ditch, M3 4BN.**

FRI 20 JULY

LEEDS AGM of PEN 'Peace Education Network' at Beechwood College. **Details: Stephanie Duczek, York Peace Community, 15a Clifford St, York, YO1 1RG.**

SAT 21 JULY

LONDON Anti-Trident Day School 10am-5pm County Hall., Informative and campaigning workshops on Trident and its relationship to unemployment, the arms race, nuclear power, civil liberties, the media, local campaigning. Spkrs/workshop leaders incl. Robin Cook MP, Peter Morris, Colin Hindes, Geoff Peppiat, Tricia Benzie. Adm. £2/£1 unwaged. **Org. London Region CND, 6 Endsleigh St, WC1. 01-388 1628.**

ROCHESTER Blanche Colebrook Memorial Lecture Spkr Peter Archer on Civil Liberties. 3pm Medway Manor Hotel, 16 New Rd, Rochester, Kent. Entrance Free. **Org. Medway & Meopham & District Fabian Societies. Details: 01-222 8877.**

LONDON 'Linking up — strategies for change' conf. for socialists, greens, trade unionists at Kingsway-Princeton College, Sidmouth St, WC1. £7/£3 unwaged. Creche. **Org. SERA/Green CND, 9 Poland St, W1V 3DG. 01-439 3749.**

FORTHCOMING

26 JULY CAMDEN 'Sex & Politics' — Women's Rights, Gay Rights: The Challenge for Labour Spkr Maureen Colquhoun. 8pm Camden Town Hall, Euston Rd, NW1. **Org. City & Westminster Sth. Labour Party.**

27-29 JULY NOTTINGHAM Shelter Annual Housing Conference University of Nottingham. **Details: Tim Mars, Shelter, 157 Waterloo Rd, SE1 8FX. 01-633 9377.**

28 JULY-5 AUGUST LONDON to **BARROW IN FURNESS** sponsored bike ride for Peace. Start 10.30am from Jubilee Gdns. **Details and sponsor forms from Moira Weaver, Dulwich CND, 29 Elsie Rd, E. Dulwich, SE22.**

29 JULY BIRMINGHAM W. Midlands CND Regional council 2pm UCATT, Gough St, Creche available. **Contact W. Midlands CND 54 Allison St, Digbeth B5 5TH. 021-632 6909.**

1 AUG LONDON Special Poetry Event in Aid of the NUM. 7.30pm Purcell Rm, South Bank, SE1. Poets both inside and outside the Trade Unions express solidarity with the miners and their families in this benefit performance by Dannie Abse, Lynton Kwesi Johnson, Joolz, Gavin Ewart and many more. Adm. £2 Bkings. 01-928 6421. **Details: 01-699 5265/01-800 7901.**

4 AUG-10 AUG BIRMINGHAM Acting for Peace in the '80s: Principles and Practice — exploring inner and outer dimensions of peacemaking. Woodbrooke College, Selly Oak. **Details: Stuart Morton, Woodbrooke EMS, 1046 Bristol Rd, D29 6LJ.**

6 AUG HIROSHIMA DAY

9 AUG NAGASAKI DAY

12 AUG-28 AUG 'Travel to Nicaragua' tour of country, meetings with different mass organisations and Government. See firsthand the gains of the revolution. **Org. New Socialist/Progressive Tours, 20 Compton Terrace, London N1. 01-226 6747.**

7-9 SEPT BIRMINGHAM West Midlands CND regions & areas development/campaign strategy weekend. St. Francis Hall, Birmingham University. **Details/biking: WM CND, 54 Allison St. Digbeth, Birmingham B5 5TH. 021-632 6909.**

12-14 SEPT BRADFORD 'Peace Studies in Higher Education' Conf. org. for those who wish to write/speak on their experience of Peace Studies teaching and research and those who wish to learn. **Contact: James O'Connell, School of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, W. Yorkshire. 0274 733455.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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GROUPS/ MEETINGS

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION – A DEMOCRATIC ISSUE. Muswell Hill Public Library, Queens Avenue, N10. 8 p.m. Wed. 18 July. John Peck National Agent, CP. All welcome.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme. Informal Question/Answer Meeting, 'The Bhagavad-Gita as Yoga'. Sun. 15 July 8 p.m. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

TUITION

DRAWING, PAINTING, PRINTMAKING, ART HISTORY, YOGA fortnights: rustic hacienda: July-September. Arts & Growth Centre, Canillas de Albaida (Malaga) SPAIN. 01-278 4411 ext. 200.

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ACADEMIC (F.), early 40s, attractive, tallish, divorced, non-smoker, lively, warm, humorous, independent, seeks nice man for talk, theatre, music, films, meals, etc., initially. London. Box 8805.

AMIABLE, INTELLIGENT man, 31, armchair Marxist, likes books, films, pubs and idle gossip, seeks articulate, humorous woman for company, friendship, even love. Bristol area. Box 8818.

AMIABLE MALE, (lecturer of sorts, 30) suspects Lonely Hearts columns are ideologically unsound but is looking for a woman friend and companion. East Midlands. Box 8777.

ANACHRONISTIC, RENAISSANCE MAN, old 35, under sentence of death, seeks female companions. London-based preferred. **Box 8761.**

AQUARIAN CONSPIRATOR *m.* (N/S), seeks female fellow traveller, of 40+ and enquiring mind and spirit, who is at home in remote places. Box 8801.

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ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL *man* (58), loves arts, seeks attractive, sensual non-smoking woman, slim/medium (any age to 53), any race/circumstances for warm friendship/enjoyments. Pref. London/surrounding areas. Box 8725.

ATTRACTIVE, SHY, Indian woman, 34, seeks warm-hearted, genuine male, 32-40, for caring, long-term relationship. Initially by correspondence. Photograph and interesting letter please. Box 8809.

AVON BASED: attractive, professional woman, forties, would like to meet professional man, similar age. Box 8807.

CLASSICAL MUSICIAN, 38, single father, medium height, slim, all muscle, very presentable, tense, rather intellectual, seeks female, thirties, for outings etc. Photo please, returned. Box 8799.

COMPANY DIRECTOR, 44, middle-brow, Asian, public school educated but no Tory, divorced, seeks slim, thoughtful, liberal, humorous, non-smoking, educated, sensuous, cultivated lady, 25/35. Into cinema, theatre, current affairs, tennis, scrabble etc. Box 8692.

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FRIENDLY, STRAIGHTFORWARD male, 40, single, leftish, interested environment, submerged in part-time study, seeks compatible female company, for evenings out. Edinburgh/Central Scotland. Box 8764.

GAY MALE graduate, tall, slim, 34 (looks 27-28), *interests include: travels & politics,* seeks similar 24-36, for sincere relationship. Photo appreciated. Box 8753.

GRADUATE WOMAN school teacher, 45, divorced, warm, honest and loving, seeks similar man for close relationship. Interests: music, travel, home-life. London home. Box 8810.

GRADUATE, WORKING-CLASS, 45, single, *enjoys music, theatre, country walks etc.,* desires to share these pleasures with sympathetic, unattached female. London/SE best. Box 8750.

HAMPSHIRE WOMAN, 35, would love to meet a sensitive, intelligent male to share laughter, walks and the sometimes overwhelming burden of being alone. Box 8804.

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HELP WANTED, divorced, vivacious lady, 54, seeks super intelligent male, to rescue her from excruciating vortex of boredom. East Midlands *location, unfortunately cannot alter.* Box 8819.

I'M 26, male teacher, seeking caring, unattached female for love and sunshine. Interests: politics, theatre, dropping from planes, wry humour. Surrey/London. Looks, age etc. unimportant. Box 8800.

INDEPENDENCE HAS ITS POINTS but... this warm, lively, slim, solvent f. BA, with daughters, seeks tallish, intelligent, sympathique male, 45+, of similar views, for pleasures of life en famille. Box 8802.

LOOKING FORWARD to early retirement, widow, 57, Herts teacher, attractive, seeks male, share walking, pub lunches, Shakespeare, writing, possibly exchange UK holiday cottage for similar France. Box 8806.

LOVELY, WARM, professional woman, young 42, intelligent, sensitive, funny, leftie, seeks similar male, London area. No assumptions made about nature of relationships, nationality, etc. A.L.A. Box 8765.

MAN 28, mature sociology graduate, friendly, though bit inhibited, smoker, eclectic intellectual interests, seeks warm, unattached articulate lady, 21-35 for relationship. Birmingham area. Box 8729.

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SHY, GENTLE, sensitive man, 32, politically leftish, likes modern music, travel, walks in the country and a good 'Bop', would like to meet an affectionate woman possibly feminist, possibly divorced or with children. I have no prejudices just looking for a mutually caring relationship. Cardiff area. Box 8803.

SW LONDON LADY, young 40s, 5' 10", attractive blonde, bright personality, no ties, wishes friendship tall gentleman, under 50, for outings. Photo ensures reply. Box 8821.

TALL, BLONDE, slim, attractive lady, young 30s, graduate Polish University, seeks mature man with similar attributes – view caring relationship/marriage. Genuine replies please. Box 8822.

WORKAHOLIC MALE, 36, seeks similar female, 18-45, view extremely casual relationship. Interest in chemistry or computers desirable but not essential. Reading, Berks. *Box 8808.*

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Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Typesetting by Sirron Typesetting, 14a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DP.
Printed by Benham & Co Ltd, Sheepen Place, Colchester CO3 3LH. Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd at 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Second class postage paid at New York NY.
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